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THE LIFE

OF THE

Rev. WILLIAM ROMAINE, M.A.

LATE RECTOR OF THE UNITED PARISHES OF
ST. ANDREW BY THE WARDROBE, AND
ST. ANN'S, BLACKFRIARS;
AND
LECTURER OF ST. DUNSTAN'S IN THE WEST.

By WILLIAM BROMLEY CADOGAN, M.A.

To live is Christ—and to die is gain.

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LATE RECTOR OF THE UNITED PARISH OF

ST. ANDREW & ST. MARTIN, A.D.

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LECTURE OF ST. ANDREW & ST. MARTIN, A.D.

BY WILLIAM ROMAN, M.A.

in

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Church of St. Andrew & St. Martin, A.D.

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PREFACE.

THE following Life of the Rev. William Romaine was undertaken at the request of his nearest relatives. It was promised to the public under the first impressions made by his death, and under an idea that such documents might have been collected from his own papers as would have furnished some of the best materials for his Biographers. But nothing of this sort was found, excepting one memorandum upon his attaining the age of seventy years, which is given in the course of this work, though it does not appear to have been designed for publication. Great as is the loss of the survivors, it is much to the honour of the deceased, that, though he had the pen of a ready writer, he employed it not upon himself, but upon his God and Saviour. Upon whose word, and upon whose salvation, he hath written largely with his own hand, and left considerable remains behind him.

Disappointed in my expectations of glean-
ing memoirs of his life from his own manuscripts, and hav-
ing time to reflect upon an undertaking, in the exe-
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cution of which I was not likely to satisfy myself or others, I would fain have resigned the task to those who were much better qualified for it than myself, as well by their superior abilities, as by their longer acquaintance with Mr. Romaine. But being pressed to it as to the performance of a promise, I could not resist the solicitation. I have therefore done the best I could — sought information from various quarters, and got it from others without seeking, for which I am thankful. I have given a detail of facts — a history, not a panegyric. Let Mr. Romaine be considered as having been a man of like passions with others, liable to mistakes, and compassed with infirmity. But let God be glorified in him through Jesus Christ, and his end in living, and mine in writing his life, will be fully answered.

THE LIFE

OF THE

Rev. WILLIAM ROMAINE, &c.

THE Rev. William Romaine was born on the twenty-fifth day of September, 1714. The place of his birth was Hartlepool, a town in the county of Durham, situated on a small promontory stretching into the German ocean. It is now a neat fishing town, with a very good pier and harbour, as well as a place of resort for the purpose of bathing. It has risen from obscurity to eminence in that part of England, through the bounty of the neighbouring nobility and gentry, whose custom it has been to accept by turns the office of Mayor, and to subscribe upon that occasion one hundred pounds towards the improvements of the town, and particularly for supporting and repairing the pier. The father of the Rev. Mr. Romaine was among the French Protestants who took refuge in England upon the revocation of the edict of Nantes: he settled in this place as a merchant, and became a member of the corporation, which is a very ancient one. He was

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a dealer

a dealer in corn, and a man fearing God and hating covetousness, of which he gave a remarkable proof in the year 1741. This country was then at war with Spain, and, whether from this circumstance, or from scarcity, there was a considerable advance in the price of wheat, from six to fifteen shillings per bol, the bushel of that country, containing about two of the Winchester measure. Upon this occasion the people rose, and came in great numbers, a formidable mob, to Hartlepool. Mr. Romaine went out to meet them, asked them their wants, and was answered that they wanted corn cheaper. He put an immediate and an effectual stop to these riotous proceedings, first by promising to sell all the corn that he had at five shillings a bushel, and then by performing his promise; for he sold to all that came, while the other merchants refused to sell any.

Such traders, however singular, as he was, are no losers themselves in the end, and great friends to the public in the mean time; what is more, they are ranked among the friends of God; for, *There is that scattereth and yet increaseth, and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat, and he that watereth shall be watered also himself. He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him, but blessing shall be upon the head of him that selleth it.* Prov. xi. 24, 25, 26.

This scripture was strictly verified in Mr. Romaine of Hartlepool; for the blessing of God and
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of the poor rested upon him. He brought up a family of two sons and three daughters, who were all comfortably and respectably settled in this world, and taught both by the precept and example of their parents to look for permanent settlements, or *mansions*, in the world to come. Their father was a man of God, and consequently of strict morals; a steady member of the church of England, a constant attender upon her services, and so exact an observer of the sabbath-day, that he never suffered any of his family to go out upon it, except to church, and spent the remainder of it with them in reading the scriptures, and other devout exercises, at home. In this manner he lived to the age of eighty-five, and to the year of our Lord 1757*.

The surviving widow and one unmarried daughter continued in the business at Hartlepool, much respected and beloved, being noted for their attention not only to the bodily wants, but to the spiritual concerns of their fellow-creatures; for it was their custom to read and explain the scriptures to their neighbours, which by some was called preaching; but was probably no more than domestic instruction, to which they admitted all who wished to partake of it, with a view to the mutual comfort and edification one of another; and such are deservedly ranked among *those women who labour with*

* For this account of the birth and parentage of the Rev. Mr. Romaine, we are indebted to Mr. Callender of Newcastle, who married one of his sisters.

us in the gospel, and whose names are in the book of life.
Phil. iv. 3.

The Rev. William Romaine was the second* son of these believing parents†. Viewed perhaps with the eye of faith, and seen to be *a proper child*: that is, as the original word *αστειος* signifies, possessed of a certain grace called urbanity, and, in its sacred use, describing one of a fair aspect to God and his people, which indicates a formation for usefulness in the city of the great King. His early discoveries of great talents, and an equal desire to improve them, induced his parents to send him to the grammar school at Houghton le Spring, in the county of Durham, founded by the cele-

* His elder and only brother was settled as a Grocer in London, and died suddenly at the George Inn at Buckden, in the thirtieth year of his age.

† I call his parents believers by his own authority, finding the following expressions in a letter to a friend, dated July 30th, 1784. "*We hope next Monday to set out for the north. In all probability for the last time. I have three sisters alive, all in years as well as myself, and we are to have a family meeting, to take our leave final as to this life. It has brought a great solemnity upon my spirits; and would be too much for my feelings, had I not all the reason in the world to believe that our next meeting will be in glory. Mr. Whitfield used often to put me in mind, how singularly favoured I was. He had none of his family converted; and my father and mother and three sisters were like those blessed people, And Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus; and, as they loved Him again, so do we.*"

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brated rector of that parish, Bernard Gilpin *. A school which flourished much in the time of its founder; nor did it lose its credit after his decease, as a "seminary of sound learning and religious knowledge, from which many have gone to our universities, and proved great ornaments to the church and nation." Among these surely may be reckoned that eminent person who is the subject of these memoirs: he was seven years at Houghton school, and, having acquired all the learning which that institution afforded, was sent to Oxford in the year 1730 or 1731. He was first entered at Hertford College, and thence removed to Christ Church. His tutor (as I think he has been heard to say) was the Rev. Mr. Fifield Allen, who was afterwards chaplain to bishop Gibson, archdeacon of Middlesex, subdean of the chapel royal, a prebendary of St. Paul's, and editor of the three Electras used in Westminster school. His proficiency under his tutor, whoever he was, may be inferred from his early appearance as an author, and that not of the common sort, but as one who had read much before he wrote any thing; who had particularly studied the scriptures in their original tongues, as an essential preparative for that holy function to which he was destined, and in which he afterwards excelled so much to the edifying of the church.

* See an account of this school in the life of Bernard Gilpin, in the second volume of the Rev. Mr. Middleton's Biography. p. 205, &c.

As a proof of his employment in these seats of literature, and of the estimation in which he was held by his superiors in them, we have a remarkable anecdote brought forward in the excellent sermon upon his death preached and published by his late curate and present successor in the church of Blackfriars, *Dress was never his foible, his mind was superior to such borrowed ornaments; and, immersed in nobler pursuits of literature, before consecrated to a still more exalted purpose, he paid but little attention to outward decorations. Being observed to pass by rather negligently attired, a visitor inquired of his friend, a master of one of the colleges, Who is that slovenly person with his stockings down? The master replied, That slovenly person, as you call him, is one of the greatest geniuses of the age, and is likely to be one of the greatest men in the kingdom*.*

He resided principally at Oxford till he took his degree of Master of Arts, which he did on the fifteenth day of October 1737, having been ordained a deacon at Hereford a year before by the then bishop of that see, Dr. Henry Egerton; whether by a nomination to a cure in his diocese, or by letters dimissory from some other bishop, is not certain. His first engagement, after he was in orders, was the curacy of Loe Trenchard, near Lidford in Devonshire. He went there upon a visit with one of his contemporaries at Oxford, whose father lived at Lidford; and upon

* See Mr. Goode's funeral sermon and the authorities there referred to.

the exprefs condition that his friend would find him employment in the way of his profefſion. This employment was accordingly found for him in the church aforementioned, which he ſerved for fix months, moſt probably, of the year in which he took his maſter's degree. In the year following he was reſident at Epfom in Surrey, as appears by a letter dated from that place October 4th, 1738, and written to Mr. Warburton upon the publication of his firſt volume of the Divine Legation of Moſes; of which letter ſome notice ſhall be preſently taken. And on the fifteenth day of December in the ſame year he was ordained a prieſt by the then biſhop of Wincheſter, Dr. Benjamin Hoadly. His title for orders was moſt probably a nomination to the church of Banſtead, which he ſerved for ſome years together with that of Horton in Middleſex, being curate to Mr. Edwards, who had both thoſe livings. At Banſtead he became acquainted with Sir Daniel Lambert, who had a country houſe in that pariſh, an alderman of the city of London, and elected lord mayor in the year 1741. Mr. Romaine was appointed his chaplain, and ſo had a door of utterance opened to him in the cathedral church of St. Paul; where he delivered the ſecond ſermon that he printed on the 14th and 15th verſes of the ſecond chapter of the Epistle to the Romans; in which is to be found a critical and a chriſtian illuſtration of that difficult paſſage. Though we do not diſcover in this ſermon the ſame fertile experience,

use, and application of the truth, as are to be found in his later writings; yet we discover the same truth itself by which he was then made free from the errors of the day, and in the knowledge and enjoyment of which he lived and died. We discover in it the reasoning of a logical head, the writing of a classical pen, the religion of a believing heart, and the preaching of a sound divine. The point evidently pursued in it is redemption from sin by the blood of Jesus, as it was revealed from God to Adam, and through him to the patriarchs; to Moses and the prophets, and through them to the Israelites; and as it was conveyed to the gentiles, before the preaching of the gospel among them, by tradition; which is the only probable cause of their sacrifices, or appeasing the Deity by the shedding of blood, a custom so unnatural in itself, and yet so universally prevalent among them. In short, the object of this discourse is to prove that a creature, whether upright or fallen, was never made to teach himself, but to learn from his Maker; and to hold forth to men the only religion which is suited to their fallen condition; not as the religion of nature, but as the religion of grace; not as a human device, but as a divine revelation. And let the author of it be considered as having attained only to the age of twenty-seven years, and he may be thought to have discovered in it a maturity of judgment, a proficiency of reading, meditation, and doctrine, to which few in so early a period of life have attained.

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The truth is, he was a believer—possessed of that unfeigned faith which dwelt in his father and his mother before him, and we are persuaded that it was in him also. And that from a child he had known the scriptures, having studied them with that proper faculty by which alone they are able to make us wise unto salvation, viz. faith which is in Christ Jesus. 2 Tim. i. 5. ii. 15.

The sermon which he printed prior to that just mentioned was one preached before the university of Oxford, March 4th, 1739, entitled, *The Divine Legation of Moses demonstrated, from his having made express mention of and insisted so much on the Doctrine of a Future State: whereby Mr. Warburton's Attempt to prove the Divine Legation of Moses from the Omission of a Future State is proved to be absurd and destructive of all Revelation.*

This was followed above two years after by a second sermon upon the same subject, and from the same text, entitled, *Future Rewards and Punishments proved to be the Sanctions of the Mosaic Dispensation.* This sermon was preached at St. Mary's, in Oxford, in the end of the year 1741, and printed in the beginning of the next year.

Whoever wishes to know more of this controversy between Mr. Romaine and Mr. Warburton, may get some information from the second volume of the history of the works of the learned for August 1739, where are to be found, Mr. Romaine's original letter to Mr. Warburton, and a second to the

the editor of the General Evening Post, occasioned by the publication of the first, with Mr. Warburton's remarks in this paper.

There is nothing in them as to the main question then in agitation, but what is to be found in the sermons upon the same subject, of which they appear to be sketches. One of them was written in the spirit of irony and sarcasm, to a person who knew the use of those weapons much better than Mr. Romaine, and who needed them more in aid of his strange paradoxes than his opponent did in support of sound doctrine. In this should appear, as a good judge hath informed us, *incorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech that cannot be condemned; that he who is of a contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.* Tit. ii. 7, 8. These are weapons with which they who are valiant for the truth may always contend lawfully. Nor is the want of them to be complained of in Mr. Romaine's sermons upon this controversy. Mr. Warburton's complaints against him were, that he professed admiration for a work and its author, which he did not mean, and put into the mouths of others, in a private letter, what he afterwards published as his own arguments against the plan of the divine legation. The whole account was inserted in the periodical history of letters before mentioned at the request of Mr. Warburton, by his friend Mr. Birch, who was afterwards Dr. Birch, and librarian of the British Museum; and who has been pleased

to enrich this famous repository with the manuscript letters which occasioned the insertion of it. Neither the printed account nor the manuscript letters will repay the trouble of reading them. The one is the representation of enemies, to whom Mr. Romaine laid himself open; the others are the most scurrilous effusions of malevolence, abusive language, and opprobrious names, in the flowing style of Mr. Warburton. Both parties are dead, and their disputes forgotten. Nor could it answer any good purpose to revive them; unless this transient recollection of a period, in the life of an eminent man, may operate as a caution to young men to be sober-minded, to study godliness and a holy life, and to leave the arts of controversy, till the wit or the warmth of youth have been corrected by the wisdom and temper of age.

Mr. Romaine was at this time engaged in preparing for the press a new edition of the Hebrew Concordance and Lexicon of Marius de Calasio; a work which employed him seven years, and the first volume of it was published in the year 1747.

Whilst he is justly celebrated as the editor of Calasio, he is perhaps no less justly censured for having omitted his author's account of the word which is usually rendered *God*, and having substituted his own in the body of the work. This is what no editor can have a right to do by any author. Had Mr. Romaine left Calasio's exposition of the word in its place, and given his own in a note, or in the margin,

margin, he might have had the credit of having restored to light, without the charge of having depreciated, one of the best and most useful works that ever was published.

Though I agree with Mr. Romaine in the interpretation of the word, not only as it is a plural noun describing a plurality of persons in the divine essence, but as it is a derivative of a verb, which signifies *to swear*, and so describes those persons under the obligation of an oath, yet I do not undertake his vindication in this instance.

But he thought himself excusable, and made his own apology in an address to the reader which he prefixed to the work. His words are these: "I have endeavoured to perform the office of a faithful editor; you have Marius himself not in the least diminished or added to, excepting only one place, and that of such great consequence, that I should have thought it a crime, if I had neglected to amend it. This I have done with the best intention, and only this once; I hope therefore that it may be pardoned*." To which he adds that he has marked this place with inverted commas, as he has many of his additions under the particles.

He has therefore warned the reader of what he is

* Fidi Editoris officio fungi conatus sum; Marium ipsum habes ne minimâ quidem ex parte vel imminutum vel exauctum, unum modo locum excipias, eumque tam magni quidem momenti, ut criminis duxissem sane, si emendare neglexissem. Hoc optimo feci animo, nec plus vice simplici; spero igitur et ignoscendum.

to expect, and has made his own excuse, by which he must stand or fall in the public opinion. He was a man, and, in common with all others, liable to err: he was a young man when he was the editor of *Marius*, and still younger when he was the antagonist of Mr. Warburton. In both instances he may have fallen into mistakes, which *days that should speak, and multitude of years that should speak wisdom,* might have corrected or prevented.

Veram ubi plura nitent—non ego paucis
Offendar maculis quas aut incuria fudit,
Aut humana parum cavit natura.

But where there are so many shining qualities in a character, and so many excellencies in his life and writings, I will not take offence at a few blemishes, which incaution may have scattered here and there, or against which human nature is provided with no caution at all.

We leave, therefore, the controversial divine, and the laborious editor of the *Hebrew Lexicon and Concordance*, and proceed to the contemplation of a man, who, having acquired a degree of eminence from the fruits of his youthful studies, became still more eminent as a minister of the church of England; who, for the space of forty-seven years, from that period, preached and adorned the doctrine of God his Saviour, with a steadiness and consistency almost peculiar to himself; and who has left a testimony for the truth in his life and writings,

which ranks him among the noble army of witnesses, who, having praised God upon earth, shall praise him for evermore in heaven.

It was certainly Mr. Romaine's plan, after he had finished his edition of the Concordance and Lexicon of Marius de Calasio, to have returned into his native country; and he had actually packed up his trunk, and sent it on ship-board with that view. But God had other plans for him. For as he himself was going to the water side, in order to secure his own passage, he was met by a gentleman, a total stranger to him, who asked him if his name was not Romaine. He replied that it was. The gentleman had formerly been acquainted with his father, and, observing a strong resemblance to him in his son, was induced to make the inquiry. After some apologies for this abrupt address, and some little conversation concerning his family and himself, the gentleman told him that the lectureship for the united parishes of St. George's, Botolph Lane, and St. Botolph's, Billingsgate, was then vacant; and that, having some interest in those parishes, he would exert it in his behalf, if he would become a candidate for the lectureship. Mr. Romaine consented, provided he should not be obliged to canvas in person; a custom which he always thought inconsistent with the character of a clergyman, and against which he openly protested many years afterwards, when he was candidate for the living of Blackfriars; so that his objection to canvas

was

was not a hasty impression taken up in his youth, but a settled persuasion that continued with him; and, as he was never backward to acknowledge the obligation when received, so, as Mr. Goode justly observes in his funeral sermon, it was "not pride, but principle."

It was in the year 1748 that he was chosen Lecturer of St. Botolph's, and he is mentioned among the preferred in the Gentleman's Magazine for November of that year, as the editor of Calasio's Dictionary.

It has been thought (and inferred from some expressions of his own in one of his letters published since his death by Mr. Wills) that his determination to leave London was the result of disappointment and disgust. That he had come to the metropolis "strongly intrenched in notions of his own exalted abilities, and flattering himself that he required no other recommendation to rapid preferment, where talent was always admired, and justly estimated*." He is supposed to have alluded to some circumstances of this kind in a letter to an intimate friend, in which he speaks of "having known a very vain proud young man, who knew almost every thing but himself, and was therefore very fond of himself; who met with many disappointments to his pride, which only made him prouder, till the Lord was pleased to let him see and feel the plague

* See Memoir of the late Rev. William Romaine in the Evangelical Miscellany for November 1795.

of his own heart. That, upon the discovery of this he tried every method that can be tried to give peace, but found none. In despair of all things else, he betook himself to Jesus, and was most kindly received. He trusted to the word of promise, and experienced the sweetness of the promise. After this he went through various frames and trials of faith, too many to mention." All this and much more Mr. Romaine writes concerning himself, to illustrate by his own experience the truth of such sayings as these, that, "the Holy Spirit will glorify nothing but Jesus. He will stain the pride of all greatness and of all goodness, excepting what is derived from the fulness of the incarnate God."

I do not see how it can be inferred from hence, that pride of heart, issuing in vain expectations of preferment, was the leading feature in Mr. Romaine's character. It is well known how every christian thinks, speaks, and writes, of himself, each claiming a title, which none but Paul would have given to Paul, of the *chief of sinners*. It is well known also, that every young man is naturally conceited, and thinks more highly of himself than he ought to think, till he learns by experience to think otherwise. It was certainly with good reason that St. Paul advised Timothy to *exhort young people to be sober minded*.

Mr. Romaine, no doubt, had this lesson to learn; he had his share of pride and vanity, and (according to a common saying in the world) he had much to be

be proud of; a good understanding—a good education—great excellency of speech, and *many enticing things of man's wisdom*. He might raise from hence ideal prospects of worldly greatness, and had reason to be thankful, if he was disappointed; if, *walking by faith and not by sight*, he could prefer *the afflictions of God's people to the pleasures of sin, and the reproach of Christ to the treasures of Egypt*. But as to being settled in the metropolis, many of his friends have heard him say, that it was the thing of all others which he last thought of, and to which he was the least inclined. It may be supposed, indeed, that from the bent of his genius to the study of nature, of minerals, fossils, plants, and the wonders of God in creation, that a country life, so favourable to these pursuits, would have been chosen by him. But God chose otherwise for him; and by a circumstance as trivial to appearance, as it was accidental, but in reality a turn of providence, such as decides the present condition of most men, called him to the lectureship of St. Botolph's, and so detained him in London, where he was kept to the end of his existence as a witness for Jesus Christ, with abilities as much suited to this meridian, as those of the apostle Paul to the meridians of Ephesus, Corinth, or Rome.

In the year following, viz. 1749, he was chosen lecturer of St. Dunstan's in the West. In the person of his predecessor* two lectureships were

* Dr. Terrick, afterwards bishop of Peterborough and London.

united, the one endowed, and founded by Dr. White for the use of the benchers of the Temple; the other a common parish lectureship, supported by voluntary contributions. Mr. Romaine was elected to both, and continued some years in the quiet exercise of his office, till the faithful discharge of it raised violent clamours and opposition against him. The rector then thought fit to dispute his right to the pulpit, and occupied it himself during the time of prayers, in order to exclude him from it. Mr. Romaine appeared constantly in his place, to assert his claim to the lectureship, as well as his readiness to perform the office. The affair was at length carried into the court of King's Bench*; the decision of which deprived Mr. Romaine of the parish-lectureship, but confirmed him in that founded by Dr. White, and endowed with a salary of eighteen pounds a year. Lest this should be removed from the parish, the use of the church was granted him: but as Lord Mansfield's decision was that seven o'clock in the evening was a convenient time to preach the lecture, the churchwardens refused to open the church till that hour, and to light it when there was occasion; so that Mr. Romaine frequently read prayers and preached by the light of a single candle, which he held in his own hand. The church doors being shut until the precise moment fixed for preaching the lecture, the congregation was usually

* In the year 1762.

assembled in the street, and there waiting for admission. The consequence was a concourse of people, collected indeed without noise and tumult, but not without great inconvenience to those who passed that way, among whom happened to be one evening the then bishop of London, Dr. Terrick, who had been Mr. Romaine's predecessor in the lectureship. Observing the crowd, he inquired into the cause of it; and being told that it was Mr. Romaine's audience in these circumstances, he interfered with the rector and churchwardens in their behalf, expressed great respect for Mr. Romaine, and obtained for him and his hearers, that the service of the church should begin at six o'clock, that the doors should be opened in proper time, and that lights should be provided for the winter season. From this period Mr. Romaine was established in his ministry at St. Dunstan's, and continued quietly in the exercise of it, to the edification of many, until the end of his life. Here surely he might set up a waymark in the course of his pilgrimage, and say, *My soul, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from Him. He only is my rock and my salvation, my defence, I shall not be moved.* Psalm lxii. 5, 6.

In the year 1750 Mr. Romaine was appointed assistant morning preacher in the parish of St. George, Hanover Square. This office is no settled establishment, but merely dependent on the will of the rector, and the person procured by him at his own option and expence. The rector, who both

called him to this office, and removed him from it, was Dr. Andrew Trebeck. The first act originated not in personal friendship, but in the recommendation of his character; the latter arose from the popularity and plainness of his ministry. He *preached* CHRIST CRUCIFIED among those who are least disposed to receive him. The church was filled with the poor, and forsaken by the rich; and that which (as a nobleman is said to have observed) was never complained of in a playhouse, was admitted as a just cause of complaint in the house of God. When notice was given him that the crowd of people attending from different parts caused great inconvenience to the inhabitants, who could not safely get to their seats, he received it in the most placid manner, and said, "he was willing to relinquish an office which he had faithfully performed, hoping that his doctrine had been christian, and owning the inconvenience which had attended the parishioners." In this instance, therefore, as well as in many others, he suffered as a christian, and had reason to rejoice: *for the Spirit of glory and of God rested upon him*, endowing him with the meekness and gentleness of his Master, and enabling him to serve his cause by his conduct, when he could no longer do it by his sermons*.

Mr.

* For information upon these circumstances in Mr. Romaine's life, I am indebted to the present rector of St. George's, the Bishop of Bristol, and to the clerk in orders, Mr. Trebeck, Dr.

Mr. Romaine entered upon this office in St. George's parish on the first of April 1750, and retired from it on the twenty-eighth day of September 1755, during which time he preached occasionally at Bow church, in exchange with Dr. Newton, (afterwards bishop of Bristol) then rector of that parish, and lecturer of St. George's, Hanover Square, and also at Curzon chapel, then called St. George's chapel, Mayfair, in exchange with Dr. Trebeck himself, who was morning preacher there.

The times in which he was called to the exercise of his ministry in the west end of the metropolis were distinguished by some signal judgments of Almighty God; such particularly as were the earthquakes by which Lisbon was destroyed; and London threatened, two shocks having been felt in it, and a third expected. These judgments were preceded by great profligacy of manners, and its fruitful parent, licentiousness of principle. "As to faith," says one who preached on that occasion, "are not the doctrines of the *Trinity*, and divinity of our *Lord* and *Saviour*, without which our *redemption* is absolutely void, and we are yet in our sins, with the intolerable burden of the wrath of God lying upon us,

Dr. Trebeck's son, to whom his lordship was so good as to refer me. The latter, after having given the above account of Mr. Romaine's retirement from St. George's, adds the following words: "I shall be always ready to attest his zeal, and in conversation with him during that time, and occasionally afterwards, I found him mild and friendly."

blasphemed and ridiculed openly in conversation and print? As to *unity of spirit*, are we not distracted and torn to pieces with schisms and separations? And as to *righteousness of life*, are not the people of this land *dead in trespasses and sins*, idleness, drunkenness, luxury, extravagance, and debauchery? *For these things cometh the wrath of God*, and disordered nature proclaims the impending *distress* and *perplexity* of nations. And O may we of this nation never read a hand-writing upon the wall of heaven, in the illuminated capitals of the Almighty, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN: *God hath numbered the kingdom, and finished it. Thou art weighed in the balances of heaven, and found wanting the merits of a rejected Redeemer, and therefore thy kingdom is divided and given away *.*"

Mr. Romaine was not wanting upon the present occasion, as appears from two sermons in print, entitled, *An Alarm to a Careless World*, and, *The Duty of Watchfulness enforced*; sermons, which are not exceeded in any of his writings. In both, and particularly in the preface to the former, there are some valuable antidotes against the prevailing philosophy

* See a sermon preached before the university of Oxford on Sunday February 15, 1756; and at several other places, on occasion of the late earthquakes and public fast, by George Horne, M. A. and fellow of Magdalen college; afterwards dean of Canterbury, and bishop of Norwich.

It is a pity that this sermon was not reprinted among those which have been collected into one volume since his death.

of

of the day, which ascribed every thing to second causes, and almost denied the existence of the first, excluding the God of nature from the works of nature, and refusing to acknowledge Him as the author of judgments, and sin committed against his divine Majesty as the cause of them. This, as he tells us in the preface before mentioned, was the philosophy of the year 1750, when the “learned accounted for *earthquakes* by changing their name into *airquakes*, and then they were explained philosophically.”

Such was the state of religion and morals, when he was called to bear his testimony in the fashionable world. Having received the ministry of light and truth, he fainted not in the discharge of it, nor had recourse to *the hidden things of dishonesty* to recommend it: but *used great plainness of speech*, that by *manifestation of the truth he might commend himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God*. He spoke freely of the manners of the great, and endeavoured to bring them to an acquaintance with their own heart, as the seat and source of all iniquity, and with Jesus Christ, as the great purifier of the heart through faith in his blood. With what judgment and clearness he brought these truths to the ears of the wise after the flesh, the mighty and noble of this world, may be seen in specimens of his preaching before them left in print, such as a sermon entitled, *A Method for preventing the Frequency of Robberies and Murders*; and another *Discourse on the Self-*

existence of Jesus Christ; both delivered at St. George's, Hanover Square.

It was in this period of his life that Mr. Romaine was called to the professorship of astronomy in Gresham college. He had not the highest opinion of the religion, morals, or wisdom of the age; and in the discharge of his duty in this new office he pursued a plan which ran counter to them all. He attempted to prove, that God was best acquainted with his own works, and had given the best account of them in his own words. He disputed some part of the Newtonian philosophy with a boldness and banter, which were not likely to be well received, when derogating from the honour of a man, who was held little less than divine. And as he observed in the mathematics, astronomy, and geometry of the day, "a difference in their demonstrations of no less than one hundred and twenty-one millions of miles;" so he spoke of the "modern divinity as bringing you no nearer than one hundred and twenty one millions of miles short of heaven." The only traces that I have ever met with of his conduct in this professorship are to be found in the Gentleman's Magazine for the month of March 1752. The reader may have recourse to this account, if he pleases, and must judge for himself how far it is just and impartial.

If Mr. Romaine quitted this office in enmity with the world, he quitted it no doubt in friendship with God, for he had God's honour at heart, how-

ever he might not have consulted his own; he had therefore God's promise in hand, *They that honour me, I will honour*. In proof of this I cannot but observe, that whatever credit he lost in the city of London, as professor of philosophy in Gresham college, he retrieved it an hundred-fold in a business of a very different nature which happened about the same time, I mean the famous *Jew Bill*. By his opposition to which, both in preaching and print, he rose and increased in favour with God and man. His reasonings upon this subject, and answers to every thing that was attempted in vindication of a project so contrary to the decrees and declarations of heaven, and so injurious to the religious, civil, and commercial interests of this country, were collected by himself in a pamphlet, which was reprinted by the citizens of London in the year 1753, and it is a masterly performance, which will bear printing again.

Mr. Jones, in his life of Dr. Horne, late bishop of Norwich, with which he has just favoured the world, has a passage so much to our present purpose, that I have taken the liberty of transcribing it. "In the year when the *Jew Bill* was depending, and after it had passed the house, he (Mr. Horne) frequently employed himself in sending to an evening paper of the time, certain communications, which were much noticed, while the author was totally unknown, except to some of his nearest acquaintance. By the favour of a great lady, it was my fortune (though then very young) to be at a table

table where some persons of the first quality were assembled, and I heard one of them * very earnest on the matter and style of some of these papers, of which I knew the secret history, and was not a little diverted when I knew what passed about them. To the author of these papers the *Jew Bill* gave so much offence (and the *Marriage Bill* not much less), that he refused to dine at the table of a neighbouring gentleman, where he was much admired, only because the son-in-law of Mr. Pelham was to be there ; he was therefore highly gratified by the part taken in that perilous business by the Rev. William Romaine, who opposed the considerations dispersed about the kingdom in defence of the *Jew Bill*, with a degree of spirit and success, which reminded us of Swift's opposition to Wood's Halfpence in his *Drapier's Letters*."

This honourable mention of one, who is now literally *a departed brother* †, reflects equal honour upon him

* Lord Temple.

† A name given to Mr. Romaine by *certain gentlemen*, whose *apology* was so ably written by one who rose to the bishoprick of Norwich. They may all be ranked among the brightest ornaments and best friends of the church of England. They differed from Mr. Romaine only in the use, application, and enjoyment of the truths they held, which he fought personally for himself, and in the boldness and fervent zeal with which he endeavoured to propagate them to others. This happy, or unhappy turn (as the world is pleased to call it) led him into what some of his former

him that made it, nor can it fail of giving pleasure to all lovers of peace and truth, as it brings two old friends and acquaintance together, who pursued the same path of study, though they have been cast into different habits of life, who have contended for the same faith, fought with the same weapons, worshipped the same God, and steadily adhered to the same communion. Why should a doubt be entertained of their happy meeting in heaven, and of their rejoicing together in the beatific vision of the LORD *their* God *? Why should such a doubt arise even from their last meeting upon earth? which was indeed extraordinary, but of which no notice might have been taken in these memoirs, had it not made its first appearance in the EVANGELICAL MAGAZINE, under the signature of T. H., as an "anecdote of Mr. Romaine, more characteristic of the man (as this writer is pleased to say) than might be found in twenty lives of him." How far the trait, as he has drawn it, is lovely in the character of a "venerable saint," every one must judge for himself who reads the extract from the Magazine for the month of March, as it is given verbatim in the note

former friends called serious mistakes and irregularities. But the church of England had never a more dutiful, affectionate, and illustrious son, than William Romaine.

* יהוה אלהיהם

below

below*. The truth, as I have it under the hand of one present at the interview, was simply this.

* "If twenty lives were written of Mr. Romaine, they will, I am confident, produce nothing more characteristic of the man, than the following anecdote. I insert the names, perhaps you will prefer the initials. T. H.

"About three weeks before the last illness of that venerable patriarch Mr. Romaine, he was walking in the city, and followed close by Dr. G. of Islington, and Mr. J. of Pluckley, who had been formerly his intimate acquaintance, and, like many other old Hutchinsonian friends, had long forsaken and shunned him. His friendship, they knew, was not the road to Canterbury."

Niger est, hunc tu Romane caveto.

Dr. G. said, "*There goes Mr. Romaine, just before us.*" Mr. J. replied, "*He is an old acquaintance of mine,*" and in his facetious manner, whipped by Mr. Romaine, and turning round, stopped him full; just then Dr. G. was at his elbow. Mr. Romaine looked at him—"Do not you know me, Mr. R.?" said he. "No," said the venerable saint, "nor my Master neither;" and, turning round on his heel, crossed the way, with contempt and indignation, leaving them confounded at this unexpected reception."

Such is the famous anecdote which is to supply the place of twenty lives! It impressed the present rector of Blackfriars as such a stigma upon his late venerable friend and predecessor, as well as such an undeserved reflection upon a great character, now living, that he immediately sent to the editors of the Evangelical Magazine the following letter.

SIR,

IN your Magazine for the last month I observed an anecdote of my late venerable rector, Mr. Romaine, which, had it been true,

this. A little while before the death of Mr. Romaine, Mr. Jones and Dr. Gaskin overtook him in Cheapside,

true, I was at a loss to account for the reasons of its insertion. If meant as a compliment, it has generally been understood as a reflection; while it casts an undeserved odium also on two characters that are very worthily respected. But as the statement which has appeared is altogether erroneous, I have no doubt but you will be ready to counteract the effect which it has produced, by publishing the circumstances, as I received them from unquestionable authority, not long after they took place. The Rev. Dr. G. and the Rev. Mr. J. were walking together in Cheapside, when the sight of Mr. Romaine at a distance gave rise to the following conversation.

Mr. J. There is Mr. Romaine—Do you know him?

Dr. G. No. I have no personal acquaintance with him.

Mr. J. Does he know you personally?

Dr. G. I am not sure that he does; have you any knowledge of him?

Mr. J. Yes. Some years ago we were very intimate, and he has been at my house some days together; I will speak to him.

As Mr. Romaine came near, he was addressed by Mr. J. in this manner—How do you do, Mr. Romaine? I do not know whether you forget one William J. I do not forget you. To which Mr. Romaine replied, “No, nor my Master neither, I hope.” Without waiting for a reply, he crossed the street, and passed on. In whatever way Mr. Romaine’s answer be understood, it implies no such reflection on Mr. J. as is so strongly marked in the statement you have given. I am rather inclined to think he meant it as a compliment, as I have heard him express himself in terms of great respect, as to the person he then spoke to.

No idea of disrespect need be attached to his immediately passing from them, for it was what Mr. Romaine would frequently

Cheapside, and Mr. Jones very good-naturedly proposed speaking to his old acquaintance, and on getting up to him, he said with a cheerful countenance, " Mr. Romaine, I do not know whether you recollect one William Jones, but I do know that I do not forget you." To which Mr. Romaine made a laconic reply, which neither of the gentlemen distinctly heard, but the words impressed upon them at the moment were, " No, nor my Master, I hope;" and true it is, that Mr. Romaine, after

quently do to his most intimate friends, as he had almost as great an aversion to stop talking in the street, as in the church, in the latter of which he was so remarkable, and so worthy of imitation. I conceive, Sir, it is a justice due to all parties to insert this, for the authenticity of which I am responsible.

I am yours,

Blackfriars, March 23, 1796.

WILLIAM GOODE.

Why was not this letter inserted, or at least acknowledged? Should not a work, called " Evangelical," be careful to speak evil of no man? Should it not, if it accuse falsely, take the earliest opportunity of acknowledging its error? Is it fair to suppose that Mr. J.'s intimacy with Mr. Romaine should have been discontinued from an idea that it would obstruct his preferment in the world? Does not the character of Mr. J. as a scholar, a clergyman, and a christian, stand too high to be foiled by a paragraph in the Evangelical Magazine? Or is it to be inferred, from the general tenor and tendency of his life and writings, that the Judge of quick and dead will deny him at the great day, and include him in that awful sentence, *Depart from me, I never knew you?* having

having made this answer, turned upon his heel, and crossed the street, leaving them not a little astonished at this unexpected reception. It might be unexpected to them, but it was not an uncommon reception for Mr. Romaine to give in the street to his most intimate friends. He had a natural quickness, and sometimes roughness in his manner, which were often mistaken, when not meant, for anger and rudeness. He was seldom in the street, but upon business; and being intent upon his engagement, and as frugal of his time as he was prodigal of his labour, he seldom *saluted any man by the way*, neither was it his custom *to fall out by the way*. It is probable that he meant to cast no reflection upon his old friend, but to *stir up his pure mind by way of remembrance*, and to express a christian hope, that as he had recognized the servant, he had not forgotten his *Lord and Master*. Nor is it likely that he should then treat one with contempt, with whom he had formerly lived in habits of friendship, and of whom he had always spoken to others with respect and affection. Mr. Jones could have had nothing in view but good will and good manners, and though he might have been hurt at this sort of reception from an old acquaintance, there is no reason to think that he is now ill-affected towards him, or that he designed any other than an honourable mention of him, after his decease, when he introduced his name into the life of Dr. Horne.

Just however as the comparison may be between

the spirit and success of Dr. Jonathan Swift and Mr. William Romaine, the causes in which they were engaged will admit of no comparison. Permission to an individual to coin halfpence may be productive of mischief, as injurious to trade, and as exciting to envy; but an attempt to naturalize the outcasts of heaven, who *have filled up the measure of their iniquities*, in crucifying their King, was an attempt against the laws and authority of the Most High, no less daring than that of the apostate emperor to rebuild Jerusalem. It was an attempt which proved the infidelity of the times in which it was made, for had Moses and the prophets been consulted, *they* had informed the world ages before, that the Jews should be *a proverb, an astonishment, and an hissing*, among all nations, until their conversion to God, and their acknowledgment of that *same Jesus, whom their fathers crucified*, as LORD and CHRIST. As no act of parliament can *convert*, so none can *naturalize* them. It is surprising that the fulfilment of the scriptures in the dispersion and disgrace of that extraordinary people has not more effect than it seems to have upon sceptical minds. The veracity of the bible we cannot dispute, but the contents of it we cannot receive, as long as we are influenced by the spirit of the world; nor will arguments or facts convince us, when our vices and inclinations oppose them.

It has been the opinion of those who have been best acquainted with divine truth and human nature,
that

that the enmity of the one against the other is not so much in the head as in the heart of man. The apostle indeed represents the heart as the seat of faith, and of infidelity; for as he tells us in one place, that *with the heart man believeth unto righteousness*, so he guards us in another against an *evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God*. I have been told (and I think by Mr. Romaine himself) that the late Rev. William Grimshaw, minister of Haworth in Yorkshire, used to be much with lady Huntingdon when she was in that part of the world; and had frequent arguments with her son, the late lord Huntingdon, upon the subject of religion. In one of them he said, "I perceive that your lordship's quarrel with religion is not in your head, but in your heart." His lordship was so affected with the remark, that he never encountered that antagonist again.

As this Mr. Grimshaw was an eminently pious and laborious clergyman* (perhaps the most so of his own or any other time); so he was among the particular friends of Mr. Romaine. Soon after his death, which happened in the year 1763, Mr. Romaine preached at Haworth. His text was that well chosen passage, Acts xi. 23, *Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all that with purpose of heart they would cleave*

* I am happy to hear that his life is coming before the public, from the pen of a well-known, a most able and useful writer.

unto the Lord. The distress of the people for the loss of so valuable a man, and their anxiety about a successor, were not to be described. The sermon was striking and impressive, and had the good effect of putting them upon fervent and united prayers for the continuance of their spiritual privileges, and the event answered their utmost wishes. The clergyman who succeeded was the Rev. John Richardson, a person of an excellent spirit, whose views of divine truth were remarkably clear and evangelical, and whose unaffected piety, and exemplary conduct, continued to be an ornament to the church of God, and a blessing to that parish, till the year 1791, when he was called to his everlasting rest*.

In February 1755 Mr. Romaine changed his condition by marrying Miss Price, who now *sits as a widow* to lament the loss of a most faithful, affectionate, and attentive husband; and to whom I take this opportunity of expressing my thanks for many authentic communications concerning him. Upon leaving his situation in St. George's, Hanover Square, or soon after, he became curate and morning preacher at St. Olave's, Southwark, upon which office he entered in the beginning of the year

* We are indebted for this account to Mr. Whitaker, now of Ringway in Cheshire, who was born in the parish of Haworth. "And though," says he, "I did not hear Mr. Romaine preach, and was too young to have made any observations, yet I have often heard the people speak of it with the greatest satisfaction and thankfulness."

1756, and continued in it to the year 1759; and to this congregation he dedicated his sermon upon the parable of the dry bones in Ezekiel, preached in their church, and published at their desire. He resided the first year in the rectory-house, and removed from hence into Walnut-tree Walk, Lambeth. Here he had a delightful retreat, in which he spent some of the happiest of his years. A little garden, which he dressed, kept, and planted; and as he viewed the productions of it with faith, and received them with thankfulness, he converted it into another Eden. Here he received his friends, particularly serious candidates for orders, and his younger brethren in the ministry, admitting them to his early breakfasts, and feeding them with knowledge and understanding. An interview of this sort, with a clergyman now living, has been kindly communicated to me, and the following account of it drawn up by his own hand. "I breakfasted one morning with Mr. Romaine, somewhere I think in Lambeth parish, but it is now many years since. On taking the bread prepared, which I thought good, he mentioned the circumstance of the late Dr. John Fothergill's having in some cases advised the not giving to sick people, and especially to weakly ailing children, preparations from London bread, on account of the too frequent adulteration it underwent previous to baking. I was then a young clergyman, and shall not easily forget the manner (for I still feel the impression) of his turning the subject to the ministerial

administration of the bread of life to the people. He touched very clearly and forcibly on a variety of modes by which the word of God was perverted, and the ill-leaven and other ingredients too often mixed with that heaven-imparted sustenance, which was intended to be meat indeed; and this he did in such familiar, easy, and yet pointed terms, and with that paternal benignity of look, as left me equally pleased, and, I trust, improved by the interview. It rendered bread to me of more value, both as a support, and as a sign. I have yet cause to thank him for the discussion it produced, and shall ever revere his memory for so well-timed and happy an allusion.

“ The same morning I remember well his mentioning it as in his opinion a fault, to preach censoriously, sarcastically, or harshly of brethren in the ministry, or of others, however remote from ourselves in matters of sentiment and persuasion. My friend Mr. George Whitfield, said he, one day told me very candidly, that there was a time in his life, when he thought he had never well closed a sermon without a lash at the fat, downy, doctors of the establishment. At that period, said he, I was not lean myself, though much slenderer than since. I went on, however, and seldom failed to touch pretty smartly upon the objects of my dissatisfaction, till one day, getting up into the pulpit in Tottenham-court-road, I found the door apparently narrowed, and moved in obliquely. The idea then struck

struck me; that I was becoming, at least in appearance, a downy doctor myself; and from that time I never more made the downy doctors a subject of castigation." He acted wisely, finding it much more comfortable to himself, and more edifying to his hearers, to preach Christ, and let other things and other people alone.

Mr. Romaine, after he left the cure of St. Olave's, was morning preacher for near two years at St. Bartholomew the Great, near West Smithfield, and removed from thence to Westminster chapel, where he had the same office for six months, till the dean and chapter withdrew their patronage and protection from it, and refused him their nomination for a licence to preach there. The place then fell into other hands, and Mr. Romaine, who was immovably attached to the established church, resigned that situation. Nor had he any stated employment in the church, excepting the lectureship of St. Dunstan's in the West, till he was chosen to the rectory of Blackfriars in 1764, to which, owing to a dispute about the election, that was settled in the court of chancery, he was not admitted till the year 1766.

During the time in which he had no settled employment in the morning, he preached charity sermons in many churches in London — sermons, which have been the means not only of spreading the gospel, but of proving its efficacy; for whatever may be ignorantly said against it as inimical to

good works, more good has been done by it, and larger collections produced by the preaching of it, than by all the mere essays upon charity put together. He preached often likewise at the Lock Hospital upon the first institution of that charity, and the building of the chapel. Being honoured also at Lambeth with the acquaintance of Archbishop Secker, he generally assisted in the parish church upon the first day of the month, it being the custom of that venerable prelate constantly to attend, and to administer the sacrament of the Lord's supper.

In speaking of him as a preacher, we ought not to omit his frequent appearances in that character before the university of Oxford. He printed some of his discourses delivered there; such as those upon the *Divine Legation of Moses*, upon *Jephthah's Vow*, upon the *sure Foundation*, and upon the *LORD our RIGHTEOUSNESS*. This latter he sent to the press, as being the last which he was permitted to preach, the pulpit being refused him in consequence of it, and he published it with the following dedication to the Vice Chancellor:

"To the Rev. Dr. Randolph, Vice Chancellor of the University of Oxford, and President of Corpus Christi College."

WHEN I delivered these discourses, I had no design to make them public; but I have been since compelled to it. I understand they gave great offence,

sence, especially to you, and I was in consequence thereof refused the university pulpit. In justice, not to myself, for I desire to be out of the question, but to the great doctrine here treated of, namely, the Righteousness of the Lord Jesus, as the only ground of our acceptance and justification before God the Father, I have sent to the press what was delivered from the pulpit. I leave the friends of our church to judge, whether there be any thing herein advanced contrary to the scriptures, and to the doctrines of the reformation. If not, I am safe. If there be, you are bound to make it appear. You have a good pen, and you have great leisure; make use of them; and I hope and pray you may make use of them for your good and mine.

I am, with my constant and hearty prayers for the university's prosperity,

Mr. Vice Chancellor,

Your humble servant in Christ,

WILLIAM ROMAINE."

While there is nothing in these sermons that can impeach his character as a scholar, or as a divine, there is something in the dedication prefixed to them, that does him great honour as a gentleman and a christian. Whatever reasons the university had for so stigmatizing a man, upon whose lips they had formerly hung, charmed by his eloquence, and

edified by his doctrine, it is plain that he took the handsomest leave of them. He seems to have departed from them as the apostles did from the presence of the council, which commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. Acts v. 41, 42.

That Mr. Romaine neither committed mistakes, nor betrayed infirmities, is what no writer of his life will affirm; nor would any reader of it believe: this would be to affirm and believe that he was not a man. But of his steady and uniform attachment to the doctrines and discipline of the church of England, no doubt can be entertained. It was an attachment which yielded to no discouragements on the one hand, to no allurements on the other; for though preferment was withheld from him in England, it was held out to him in America, from whence the most pressing invitations were sent to him to accept of St. Paul's church in Philadelphia, with a salary of six hundred pounds a year; and these were seconded by the most urgent and repeated intreaties of his friend Mr. Whitfield, who considered him as *persecuted in one city*, and therefore clearly called to *go unto another*. But Mr. Romaine loved his church and his king; and though he felt and professed that affection for Mr. Whitfield which every lover of Jesus Christ must feel for so able and faithful a preacher of his name, so useful an instrument in the hands of God of reviving the doctrines of the reformation in this country, yet he never

never could agree with him in any mode of propagating the truth itself, which he thought inconsistent with the life of conduct prescribed to a clergyman. As to America, where episcopacy was never likely to be established, nor monarchy to be long endured, it was a soil by no means genial to him; he expected therefore little from being transplanted into it; and he lived to see many, who had fled to it, as an Utopia of religion and liberty, return with no small delight to old England again.

As a proof of his unalterable regard for this church and nation, he first printed in 1757, the year of his dismissal from the university pulpit, *An Earnest Invitation to the Friends of the Established Church, to join with several of their Brethren, Clergy and Laity, in London, in setting apart one Hour of every Week for Prayer and Supplication during these troublesome Times.* After having mentioned the motives and calls to prayer, he proceeds to the matter of it, and invites us to "pray for the peace of our established church, and for all orders and degrees of its ministers, beseeching God to give them his grace and heavenly benediction, that both by their life and doctrine they may set forth his glory, and set forward the salvation of all men. And to the end there may never be wanting such persons in the church, let us pray for all seminaries of christian education, especially for the two universities, &c." As a proof of his good wishes towards all christian people, he adds, "May the God of love dispose us also to pray fervently for all the protestant dissenting

dissenting congregations which love the Lord Jesus in sincerity. May he shed that love abroad in all our souls, which alone can effectually free us from party spirit, &c." This same tract he reprinted in the year 1779, and again in 1795, a few months before his death. And it is to be hoped that being dead, he will yet speak in it to many, and excite them to the practice of what he there recommends. If any additional arguments are wanting to enforce this good work upon christians, besides those in this useful little tract, they are to be found in a sermon published at the same time with the first edition of it, entitled, "The Duty of Praying for Others." It was printed indeed without a name, but bore such indubitable marks of Mr. Romaine's style and spirit, as to leave no doubt respecting its author, and indeed it may be ranked among the best of his writings.

That which he recommended to others, he practised himself, and found so much encouragement to *pray always and not to faint*, as to be induced a few years afterwards to send a circular letter to every serious clergyman, whom he knew, and whom he remembered at the throne of grace, inviting them to set apart one hour in the week for calling upon God; imploring his mercy upon the established church, that he would revive his work in it, and send forth more labourers into this part of his harvest. This letter will appear in the printed collection; but as it will bear a second and a third reading, as
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the subject is important in itself, and handled by Mr. Romaine in his choicest manner, as it is a true specimen of his zealous affection in a good thing, as well as of his particular love to this church and nation; as it shews his knowledge of himself, and contains much godly experience, which may be useful to others; it is here inserted, as forming no inconsiderable part of his history; and may all the benefits, that he wished, be the fruits of its publication.

“ My dear brother in our precious Jesus,

IN the year 1756, a weekly hour of prayer was agreed upon by several religious clergy and laity, in order to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, till he should be pleased to put a stop to the calamities of that time. He did hear us, glory be to a prayer-hearing God, and he turned our supplications into praises. About that period it began to be laid very near my heart to pray earnestly and often for the prosperity of our Sion, for which I never fail to make intercession in all my addresses to the throne of grace. But once a week, on Friday, I have what I call the clergy's litany. In which, after general petitions for the out-pouring of the Spirit upon all the ministers of our church, I make mention by name of those my fellow-labourers, whom God has highly honoured in making them

faithful and useful in the ministry. As I go over their names, recommending them to the care, and their people to the blessing of our Glorious Head, it is my custom to ask particularly for them, such things as I know or hear they want. Your name has been long in my list, and you owe me many, many prayers, a lawful debt, which now upon demand I hope you will repay me. I ask it in justice due to myself. I intreat it for the glory of our common Lord, and for the advancement of his own cause and kingdom, and for your own soul's prosperity. O that I may write any thing to stir you up to pray, till you as far outstrip me herein, as to make it a point of gratitude for me to pray more and more fervently for you. I will mention some of the motives which moved me to this practice, and some of the advantages which I have found in it, and I beg of the Lord to make them the means of inducing you to join with me in this delightful exercise of brotherly love.

I. One of the first things which put me upon it was the frequent use of the hour of prayer, mentioned above. We are called upon in scripture to make supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks for all men; and we are very often exhorted to pray for the household of faith, and more particularly for the ministers of it, agreed together in this land to worship the same Lord in the same outward establishment, to which you and I are very closely connected both in profession and principle.

principle. To us, as ministers, the command should be of great force—"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem"—This peace depends upon the Lord's sending and blessing his ambassadors of peace. They are his ministers attending continually for this very thing: He raises them up, he fits them for the advancement of it; he prospers them for the sake of the prosperity of his church, as he says, "I will clothe the priests in Zion with salvation, and then her saints shall shout aloud for joy." For this reason we find St. Paul in all his epistles desiring to be prayed for—"Pray for us"—for grace, for gifts, for success. He puts the churches upon asking what their ministers wanted. Although God has promised it, yet he will be intreated for it. The prayer of faith never returns without a blessing, which I have remarked again and again to the praise of him who says, "Ask, and ye shall have," and this has been a

2. Second argument very powerful with me. The command given to pray for the peace of Jerusalem has a promise—"They shall prosper that love thee."—This has been fulfilled. I have seen manifest sensible answers to this prayer—clear displays of the faithfulness of the promise-maker. He has vouchsafed to give the desired mercy—not for the merits of our prayers, but for the sake of his own great Name. He put it into our hearts to see what his church wanted, to ask the supply of him, and now having received it, to ascribe all the glory to his grace—"Worthy is the Lamb." His kindness hitherto

thereto is a mighty encouragement to go on, and is a

3. Motive for me to persevere, and for you to join with me. He says when the work is great and the ministers but few—"Pray ye the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth labourers into his harvest field." This was our warrant to ask, and asking in faith according to his will, we had confidence in him that he would hear and answer; and he has been as good as his word; we have tried it, and found it cannot be broken. For these last eleven years we have been praying for more labourers, and every year he has sent forth some more. O that he may give the word, and greater still may be the company of the preachers. Have we not all the reason in the world to expect it? The promise stands sure—his hand is not shortened—his love is not abated—prayer has not lost its efficacy with him to engage his love and power to fulfil the promise. Doubtless more, more labourers shall be sent out, if more of us join in fervent prayers, nothing wavering. While we continue to pray, he will continue to answer. This is fixt as the throne of God—"I will not suffer my faithfulness to fail." O how has my dependance on his unalterable word been strengthened, by seeing it so constantly fulfilled! and how has my attachment increased to our established church, by his raising up more ministers among us! Indeed he owns our establishment at this day; and thereby he encourages us to pray on; and

and if we do, we may hope to see greater things than these. May you and I find reason to be asking the enlargement of Christ's kingdom in our land, until he remove us into his kingdom of praise.

4. These arguments are continually enforced by the constraining love of Jesus, which keeps the soul in a good frame to pray for the advancement of his honour and glory. While I find a warm heart to him, I cannot help wishing that others may be won over to the love of him. To set him forth, that they may behold his matchless glory, is our office. Every gospel minister is raised up to sound aloud the praises of the wonderful person, and of the infinitely perfect work of the divine Saviour, in whom all the perfections of the Godhead shine out in the richest display of their beauty, love, and power. The gospel-ministry was ordained for this purpose, and it is blessed to this day to the hearts of poor sinners, by bringing them to see, to admire, and to enjoy the love of the Father through the salvation of the Son, by the grace of the Spirit. This is the ministration, which exceedeth in glory. O what an honour is it that we should be called to partake of these blessings ourselves, and that by our means the Lord would, and does, convey them to our people. The sense of this is constraining. Under the influence of it we cannot but pray for his ministers, that they may spread his gospel, and advance his fame. O, for more love to this precious Jesus! and to his cause in your heart, it will be as a thousand

land arguments to put you upon praying for an increase of labourers, and for an increase of usefulness in those he has already sent out: and, if you do pray thus, and continue to pray, it will be the most likely means of your experiencing more of his love, for he cannot alter the word that is gone out of his mouth. His promise to them that pray for the peace of Jerusalem is, "They shall prosper who love thee," which is a

Fifth encouragement. It is good for our own souls. They prosper by it; while we are concerned for the honour of Jesus, and for the advancement of his gospel, we are taking the best care we can of our own interest. The soul that watereth others, shall be watered itself; so it prospers. The prayer for blessings on our fellow-labourers brings a shower of blessings into our own bosom. I should be very unthankful, yea, beyond measure, if I did not acknowledge it. I have not prayed in vain for these eleven years. No. I have indeed prospered, and have received many mercies; some I will mention, not to set myself up for any thing, who am the very sink of hell, and feel in me to this moment indwelling corruptions enough to damn a thousand worlds; but I mention them to the glory of sovereign grace. There is in every one of us a desire to be great and esteemed, a bitter root of pride, which works in abundance of vile tempers, all dishonourable to Jesus, and hurtful to our own souls; I have found this praying for my dear brethren, and always
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by name, has given many a blow at that bitter root, and has checked several of its branches, such as envy at their success, shyness to their persons, an evil eye at their gifts or their graces. That party spirit, under the bondage of which no one ever laboured more than myself, has been in a good degree conquered; and so has the unwillingness to bear reproof, very hard to bear: and the will given to be thought less than the least, the sole work of almighty grace. And I ascribe it to my constantly praying for God's ministers, that he has enabled me in any degree not only to get the better of those vile tempers, but also to grow in brotherly love. I find my heart knit to those I never saw, and am glad of their prosperity in mind, body, or estate. My very soul rejoices in any good in them, or good done by them. Their present number (may the Lord add to them an hundred-fold), their being almost of one mind, and of one heart, their growth in grace, their usefulness among their own people, and their writings for the public benefit; these are become sweet subjects of thankfulness. My prayers are more in faith because I reap the fruit of them, and can join praise with them. To every petition I can say, thanks be to the Lord; I have good encouragement to pray on. Every year I see our Jerusalem prosper, and they also prosper that love it. Are not these great advantages, and are they not sufficient to induce you to join your prayers with mine? As for me, God forbid, my dear brother, that I

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should cease to pray for you.—May the Lord the Spirit put it into your heart to pray for me, and for the rest of our fellow-labourers, until you find more advantages from your prayers than I have done. If you weigh these things with attention, and God incline you to join us in prayer, there is a scripture which warrants this, and which contains some gracious promises to the practice of it; the consideration of it has been with me a

Sixth motive. It is in Matt. xviii. 19, 20. *Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth—We do agree to meet together in one place.—Where is there a better than the throne of grace? We do agree touching the thing we are to ask, namely, the blessing of him that sitteth upon the throne on his own ministers. What can be more pleasing to him, than to wish them well, to whom he has done so well, as to call them to, fit them for, and prosper them in, his work? O it is not to be described nor conceived, how his heart is set upon this. To send out ministers to promote his glory through the salvation of his people, is the ruling affection in the head of the church; and when he intends to send them out, he gives his people the spirit of prayer, to desire of him pastors after his own heart, and to encourage them to ask he promises, *Whatsoever ye ask, shall be done for you of my Father, who is in heaven: for the Father himself loveth you, and will give you whatsoever you ask in my name: And when any two of you agree to pray for*
*more**

more labourers, or for greater usefulness in them who do labour in the word and doctrine, I will then be in the midst of you, spiritually present, that you may have communion with me in prayer, and that you may be satisfied I do hear, and will answer. How inviting, how persuasive are these words! Surely they ought powerfully to influence you and me. What may we not expect from meeting often in the presence of Jesus? Try, my dear brother. Be much in his company, and see what will come of it. Your heart will certainly be more knit to him, and he will knit you closer to his other ministers in the unity of the Spirit. He will bring us to be of the same mind in the Lord. This is the three-fold cord which is not quickly broken, because it is a bond of the Lord's own making, and of the Lord's own keeping. He maintains it, and he ties it closer by giving us sweet fellowship in one another's prayers, and by enabling us to act and live, according as we pray, for the good of our brethren. Thus he makes it appear, that we are taught of God to love one another, for he only can teach us to love unfeignedly, and with a pure heart fervently. This is the most blessed union upon earth, because it flows from our being one with Christ, and proves that we hold the head, and are under him as living members in his body united together, having the same care one for another.—Hereby we know what the communion of saints is—we experience, and we rejoice in its blessings. O how will this strengthen the

hands of each other—it will make us mighty through our God to do our work, to endure hardship, to fight our battles, yea, to the many antichrists of this our day, we shall become terrible, like an army with banners. May the Lord make you a good soldier in this noble army; and he will, if you will join with us. Your prayers will not return void into your own bosom. No, no. Every prayer for your brethren will bring down a blessing upon yourself, and you will find more arguments daily than I have room to mention. Only one thing more I must take notice of, which is my

Seventh Motive, namely, the present necessity. Look round the island—examine the state of it. You cannot help seeing how things are going on. The prospect is alarming. Our national sins had been long crying aloud for vengeance, but the long-suffering of our God has withheld it; and to leave us, as a people, without excuse, he sent mercy instead of judgment. He revived his work—raised up ministers—sent them in his name to proclaim his grace in Jesus, and to call sinners to repentance. What has been the effect? O guilt, beyond that of Sodom and Gomorrah! The gospel is rejected. This one sin is filling up the measure of our iniquity fast. Judgment slumbereth not. It is abroad. The storm is gathering. A dark black cloud is hanging over us. It has not burst yet, but God knows how soon it may. If it should, what have we not to fear? The scripture character of the

the latter days is now fulfilled. We are in the dregs of time. The damnable heresies, as foretold, are brought in. Atheism, infidelity, and their poisonous fruits, harbingers of the great day, do abound, and security marks it to be near at hand. Thanks be to God there is a little light breaking through this dismal cloud, which affords us a ray of hope. Jesus has not left himself without witness. He has still a cause, and ministers to plead it, in our land. But how few are they? Blessed be God for any. He, who sent them, can send more, and he bids us pray for more. What he bids, the times press and enforce upon us. When was there, when can there be, greater need? Does not every thing precious in time and in eternity call upon us to pray for one another, and to pray, that the Lord may add to our number daily? Is not his glory blasphemed openly, his mercy abused, his gospel rejected, and therefore are not public and private virtues neglected, yea, despised? What can stop the deserved ruin? Only God, and he only in the way of his own appointment. The gospel is his saving ordinance, and ministers are the means which he uses to make the gospel the power of God unto salvation. O let us pray then for more of them. To this let the love of dear Jesus constrain us—the love of our king—and of our country—the love of our religious and civil liberties—the love of our families and children—the love of our own souls, and of our parishioners. O that God may put it into your

heart by these, or any other motives, to join with us in praying him to send forth more labourers into his harvest. Amen, Amen, say I. Let all that love the Lord Jesus in sincerity say, Amen.

My dear brother, if God should incline your heart to this work and labour of love, there are two things earnestly recommended to you; the

First is to meet us at a set hour; that we may agree in our joint prayers, and may have the divine promise to depend upon for the blessing we ask. We have for some time met every Friday at noon, but it has been found inconvenient; and by consent it is now fixed from nine o'clock on Friday morning to ten. You will then meet a great deal of good company at our court—several dear ministers and fellow-labourers round the throne, besieging it with their prayers for each other, and for the increase of their number. Whatever be the general issue, it will be well with us supplicants. Our labour will not be in vain in the Lord. If our prayers do not remove the affliction of Joseph, yet we grieving for it have a promise of safety, when that affliction comes to be destructive, as you may read at large in Ezekiel chap. ix. A

Second thing is desired of you, namely, that you would pray for the brethren by name. This is not a trifling matter. Indeed it is not. Make trial of it, and you will find more advantages in it than I have mentioned above. It has been exceeding profitable

fitable to my own soul for several years, and I doubt not but experience will make it so to yours.

I leave all that I have said in the Lord's hand, that he may apply it to you, as seemeth him good. Whether you join with us or not, I will not cease to pray for you and yours, that the work of the Lord may prosper in you and by you. Only remember the time is short. The work is great. The Lord God bless you in it, that his harvest may be got in soon, and his labourers may go to rest. In this happy number may you and I be found. When our prayers are over may we continue our praises to Father, Son, and Spirit, three persons in one Godhead, to whom we shall be giving equal glory, worship, and thanks, through a long blessed sabbath. Hallelujah. Amen."

Such an epistle will bear, and indeed it requires, frequent reading. The business recommended in it should not be forgotten. A list might be circulated every year of such as call upon the Lord in every place, and labour in his word and doctrine. To their names might be added any particular circumstances, which call for praise or prayer. And an hour, or more, might be well spent in making mention of each severally before God, without vain repetitions. An anniversary sermon might be preached, giving a short account of the progress of the gospel in the kingdom, and published, as a history of the church, for the benefit of the present and future ge-

nerations. It was Mr. Romaine's custom to preach a sermon of this sort every year upon the second day of March, being the day of his election to the living of Blackfriars. "In one of these discourses he mentioned that himself and three others agreed to spend one hour in the week, at a stated time, in prayer for the revival of the power of godliness in the established church *." What an increase did he live to see! from units to hundreds! And what encouragement did he hold out to the ministers and people of God, to devote a small portion of their time to prayer, supplication, intercession, and giving of thanks, for the extension of the kingdom of Jesus Christ! for the revival of that work of the Lord which shall stand for ever in a people whom he forms for himself, and of whom it may be observed, that in proportion as they are formed for the Lord in the next world, they are formed for good in the present one; the increase of them therefore is a great public concern.

We have now followed the object of these memoirs through some of the changes and chances of this mortal life, as well as through some of the trials and tribulations of the christian life, to his final settlement as to this world in the rectory of St. Andrew Wardrobe, and St. Ann's, Blackfriars. Nor were the leadings of Providence less wonderful in this

* See Memoir of the late Rev. William Romaine, in the Evangelical Magazine for November 1795, p. 449.

circumstance of his life, than they had been in most of the preceding ones. The right of presentation to this living is vested in the crown and in the parishioners alternately. Mr. Romaine's predecessor was Mr. Henley, a nephew of the then lord chancellor Henley. He enjoyed this preferment only about six years and a half, and died young of a putrid fever, in consequence of visiting one of his parishioners in that disorder. He was a man of an excellent spirit, and of great piety, and promised to be very useful in the church; but it pleased God to remove him, and to incline the hearts of some in the parish, upon his decease, to propose Mr. Romaine as his successor. This was done without Mr. Romaine's knowledge or consent: the first intimation which he received of it was from a newspaper, which he took up by accident, when upon a journey. His friends, who first started the idea of nominating him as a candidate for the living, entertained little or no hopes of success; but, upon sounding their fellow-parishioners, they found that at least two thirds of them were in his favour. In order to check their progress, a rumour was spread that he was above soliciting their votes and interest. But upon the day being fixed for each candidate to preach his probation sermon, Mr. Romaine was apprised of it, came immediately to London, and made his appearance among them. The day appointed for his preaching was the thirtieth of September 1764, upon which occasion many absented themselves who had been

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in the habits of hearing him, lest they should crowd the church, and occupy the seats of the inhabitants; and, by giving them offence, throw obstacles in the way of his election. The sermon, which he preached upon this occasion, does him infinite honour as a christian preacher, and an honest man. It contains the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, as it is in Jesus, with a very plain and close application of it to each particular hearer. He thought fit to assign his reasons in it for not having behaved towards them in the common way of soliciting their favour. “ Some have insinuated that it was from pride that I would not go about the parish from house to house, canvassing for votes; but truly it was another motive. I could not see how this could promote the glory of God. How can it be for the honour of Jesus, that his ministers, who have renounced fame, and riches, and ease, should be most anxious and earnest in the pursuit of those very things which they have renounced? Surely this would be getting into a worldly spirit, as much as the spirit of parliamenteering. And as this method of canvassing can not be for Jesus’s sake, so neither is it for our honour: it is far beneath our function: nor is it for your profit. What good is it to your souls? what compliment to your understandings? what advantage to you in any shape, to be directed and applied to by every person, with whom you have any connexion, or on whom you have any dependence? Is not this depriving you of the freedom of your choice?

choice? Determined by these motives, when my friends of their own accord put me up as a candidate, to whom I have to this hour made no application, directly or indirectly, I left you to yourselves. If you choose me, I desire to be your servant for Jesus's sake; and if you do not, the will of the Lord be done."

This sermon operated greatly in his favour; it was well received by the parishioners, and published at their request.

There were two other candidates for the living besides himself, and a scrutiny was demanded in favour of each at the close of the first day's poll. This scrutiny was entered into, but produced no decision, the proper qualifications not being settled which entitled an inhabitant to vote at the election of a rector. A second election was agreed upon by the friends of the several candidates, which ended in favour of Mr. Romaine, who had a great majority of votes, and was declared duly elected. But this did not satisfy the other candidates; each put in his claim, and the business was transferred into the court of chancery. It continued there for more than a year, and, in the end of January or beginning of February 1766, a decree was given by lord chancellor Henley in favour of Mr. Romaine. He was instituted and inducted accordingly, but was observed to tremble much during the whole ceremony of his admission. His feelings have been expressed by himself in a letter which he wrote upon the decision

cision in chancery. " My friends are rejoicing all around me, and wishing me that joy which I cannot take. It is my Master's will, and I submit. He knows what is best both for his own glory, and his people's good ; and I am certain he makes no mistakes in either of these points. But my head hangs down upon the occasion, through the awful apprehensions which I ever had of the cure of souls. I am frightened to think of watching over two or three thousand, when it is work enough to watch over one. The plague of my own heart almost wearies me to death ; what can I do with so vast a number ?"

Such were the methods by which he obtained the living of Blackfriars, and such the views with which he entered upon it. His aims were directed to the glory of God, the profit of his parishioners, and the edification of the church in general. They cannot be better represented than they have been by himself in two letters kindly communicated by a respectable clergyman, to whom he gave a title for orders the year after his admission to the church of Blackfriars. As these letters are not to make a part of the printed collection, they are here rescued from oblivion ; and such parts of them produced, as express the writer's ideas of his own situation, as well as of the duties incumbent upon a person who is offering himself a candidate for holy orders. The expressions alluded to are the following—" In this whole affair I have desired simply to follow what was
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right; and to aim at the divine glory; and if I know my own heart, (which is not easily known) my eye is single in your coming to me. I desire your good, and not mine own; your being with me may be the means of much edification to your own soul, and may tend greatly to your future usefulness. I would have my church a nursery, where such as you may grow, till you are fit to be planted out, and when fit, I would not keep you a day, but rather use my interest to provide some preferment for you. This is my plan, my title, and my pulpit, and what I have in consequence of the Lord's sending me to Blackfriars. I have them for the Lord, and I beg grace of him that I may employ them so as shall be most for his glory. I shall receive you on this footing when you come. May the Lord the Spirit unite your heart to me as mine is to you, and may we be taught of God to love one another.

I hope you will not forget me in your addresses to the throne of grace, and if I may give my advice, it is needful for you at present to be much in prayer for these graces.

First, for the right knowledge of yourself—your vileness.

Secondly, for the right knowledge of Jesus—his glory.

Thirdly, for a single eye to his glory in your taking upon you to be his minister and servant in holy things. Fourthly, for a love to souls; when you know much of his love in saving your soul, that
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will make you labour much for Jesus, in trying to set forward the salvation of others. And, lastly, you should beg of God, and be always begging as long as you live, for an entire dependance upon the Lord to bless you in his work. We toil all night and day, and catch nothing, till the Lord bless the gospel net. The Lord bless it in you and by you, so prays your real friend and servant,

WILLIAM ROMAINE."

Lambeth, August 4, 1767,

This same gentleman expected to have been ordained upon Trinity Sunday, but was disappointed. He gained by this loss a second letter from his friend Mr. Romaine, equally expressive with the first of his views of the christian ministry.

" Dear Mr. —

It was not without good reason that the Lord would not suffer you to be ordained last Trinity. He had much to teach you in these months, and I hope you have been a good scholar. He wanted to teach you your absolute unfitness for the work of the ministry, and thereby to bring you to an entire dependance upon him. You cannot love the work, nor be successful in it, nor, upon succeeding, give Him all the glory, but through his grace. He laid you by a little to make you more perfect in this lesson. It is very hard to learn, for I am still at it every

every day, and get but little ground. Self, proud self is such a dull scholar, and has such a bad memory, that though I am satisfied to-day Christ must do all *for* me, and all *in* me, and all *by* me too, yet I soon forget, and soon want to be something in the work myself; but I do know, and, blessed be the name of Jesus, I do experience that his grace is sufficient for me; chiefly in the pulling down of my pride, and in making me willing to be nothing, that Christ may be ALL. May he pour out upon you and me more of his Spirit, to lay self very low, and to exalt the Saviour."

These letters speak for themselves, being the language of a person *who had determined to know nothing among his people, but Jesus Christ and him crucified.* A determination which being generally made in the Spirit, is generally pursued with steadiness; at least it was in the instance before us unto the end of his life.

He entered upon his living not only in the faith and patience of Jesus Christ, but also with a decided preference to the church of England, in which he was called to preach his name. He therefore adhered to her discipline, and explained her doctrines, with a view to enforce upon his hearers conformity to both, and a regular continuance in her communion. In pursuance of this plan, he declared his intention of preaching a course of sermons upon the thirty-nine articles of religion, and in the process
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of this service he received from his parishioners the following petition.

“ To the Rev. William Romaine, Rector of the united Parishes of St. Andrew by the Wardrobe, and St. Ann, Blackfriars.

“ Reverend Sir,

As you have been pleased to intimate an intention of preaching a course of sermons upon the thirty-nine articles of the church of England, and have actually proceeded in a manner that has given general satisfaction—We, the churchwardens, parishioners, and inhabitants of the above-mentioned parishes, whose names are hereunto subscribed, reflecting how many christians are unhappily deprived of reaping any benefit from them, owing to their being confined within the narrow limits of a single church, do, for the interest of religion in general, and for our benefit in particular, join in requesting you (if agreeable to yourself) to print and publish the same; and we are the more prompted to make this request, as we are informed that there is no work of the kind now extant.

*John Whinn
Roger Butcher
Thomas Hunter, Sen.
James Hudson
William Slade*

*John Edrington
Harman Samler
Richard Smedley
Thomas Hunter, Jun.
Ann Rodbard*

William

<i>William Trickets</i>	<i>John Wilkinson</i>
<i>John Holton</i>	<i>John Righton</i>
<i>Henry Collins</i>	<i>John Hore</i>
<i>John Biddle</i>	<i>Richard Hudson</i>
<i>Ann Wells</i>	<i>M. Ramsey</i>
<i>R. Packer</i>	<i>John Griffiths</i>
<i>I. Hutchins</i>	<i>Os. Olney</i>
<i>William Cock</i>	<i>W. Box</i>
<i>Henry Adlidge</i>	<i>John Mullis</i>
<i>William Mountague</i>	<i>Samuel Thomas."</i>

This petition was found among Mr. Romaine's papers, but the request contained in it was not complied with.

Nor was he less attentive to the temporal than to the spiritual concerns of his situation. He found the parsonage house wholly unfit for the residence of a pastor, it having been turned into warehouses, and being wholly out of repair. He took down the old premises, and built a handsome rectory-house close to the church, for himself and his posterity. The church also, when he took possession of the living, was surrounded with a dead wall, and the avenues leading to it very narrow. His parishioners, with whom he lived from the first in peace and harmony, were prevailed upon to repair the church, and to erect a gallery at the west end of it for the accommodation of his numerous hearers, to pull down the high wall that inclosed it, so as to give it light and air, and to make all the avenues to it wide and commodious; by which means it is be-

come one of the best places of worship in London. Mr. Romaine, who never asked any favour for himself, but always acknowledged the smallest, solicited his friends that attended the church to present the united parishes with a token of their gratitude. This request was cheerfully complied with, and the sum collected towards defraying the expences of erecting the gallery, and other improvements, amounted to five hundred pounds, which the parishes have handsomely acknowledged by an inscription over the west door*.

Whilst he promoted the improvement of the Lord's house, he laboured much to obtain decent behaviour in those who came there to worship. He too justly complained of that which with all his influence he was scarce able to remedy, the disgusting and irreverent custom of coming into church during the time of service—as if confession of sin—the praises of God in his own psalms—the reading of his

* This Church was repaired and beautified Anno Dom: 1774 at the expence of the united Parishes, and the generous contribution of the congregation.

The Rev. William Romaine, M. A. Rector
of St. Andrew by the Wardrobe | of St. Ann's Blackfriars

Charles Griffiths
Thomas Cook

John Holton
John Davis

Church-wardens

Love as Brethren

will

will in his own word—and prayers founded upon the scriptures, and extracted from them, were a mere nothing: or as if we were to assemble ourselves together for no other purpose than just to hear a sermon. Whatever excuses may be made for such conduct upon a week day, none can be made for it upon the Lord's day, the great business of which is his public worship, and of course our gathering together in places where he has chosen to put his name. If our place of residence is at a distance from our place of worship, we should act in this case as we do in every other, and consider that the further we have to go, the sooner we should set out. If we are to go to market, or on a journey, or on any worldly business or pleasure, we can rise, we can dress, we can set out in time, and think an apology necessary if we are not punctual: but, as to church, it seems a matter of perfect indifference, when we go, or whether we go there at all. But why are we more diligent in things which are temporal, than in those which are eternal? Why do we presume to insult the Creator, in a way in which we would not insult a fellow-creature? How can we expect a blessing from one part of the service, when we have despised and neglected the other? Or indeed how can we expect a blessing from any part, unless we have seriously and devoutly attended the whole?

There is also another custom too prevalent in and about places of public worship, which was peculiarly offensive to Mr. Romaine, and which was often

reproved by him in more ways than one. The custom alluded to is that of people's conversing together either in the church, or churchyard, in a vestry, or in a board-room, as soon as the service is over. He not only spoke against such conversations from the pulpit, but frequently interrupted them, when he came out, by tapping the shoulders of those who were engaged in them; and once, if not oftener, by knocking their heads together, when he found them particularly close, and whispering in their ears, that they had forgot the "parable of the sower." He himself studiously avoided every thing of the kind, being always in church some time before service began, and retiring from it to his own house as soon as the service was over, without ever speaking a word, except to his curate, his clerk, or parish officers, upon necessary business in the vestry. A woman, it is said, once saluted him, as he came down the pulpit stairs, by telling him, that "he had been greater that night than ever." And he answered her by saying, that "the devil had told him so before he left the pulpit." If Mr. Romaine uttered these words, he took them out of the mouth of the celebrated John Bunyan, who is supposed to have been their original author, and to have uttered them upon a similar occasion. The zeal of the good woman, which provoked this saying, seems to have been somewhat like that of another in the company of our Lord, who cried out to him, *Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked.* And the answer

answer of the servants might have been given in the spirit of their Master, *Yea, rather blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it **. These certainly are the great ends for which we assemble together, and were they kept always in view, they would regulate our behaviour in the use of the means which lead to them.

Mr. Romaine was a great benefactor to his parishes in another respect, and that is, as a promoter of charity. There was seldom any occasion of distress on which he did not call upon his hearers to contribute to the relief of the sufferers; and the sum raised was generally proportionate to the motive urged, viz. the love of Christ constraining himself and those that heard him. The annual collections for the schools in the ward, and the poor of the parish, made in the church, at the weekly sacraments, which he instituted, and after the charity sermons, which he preached, amounted on an average to three hundred pounds a year. On his first coming to the living the pew-openers employed in the church were two in number; when he died, they were increased to

* We cannot but admire the meekness and gentleness of Christ, as they were entirely free from that roughness and severity which often cleave to the expressions of the best christians. He does not treat this woman as though she was a messenger of Satan, sent either to flatter or to buffet him, but advises her to get more from his company than a mere transient impression, which might be soon effaced without producing its effects in her religious conduct.

eight, and each capable of getting a comfortable livelihood from what was given them by the congregation, without any assistance from the parish. When the dreadful fire happened in Blackfriars in the year 1793, by which a number of houses were consumed that had a poor family in each story, Mr. Romaine was an eye witness to the distressing scene. He called upon one of his parishioners at half past three in the morning during the time of the fire, and again at nine o'clock, anxious to know what could be done for the poor sufferers. He commissioned his friend to give them something for their immediate relief; and accordingly two guineas were given to each sufferer, to the amount of about ninety guineas in the whole. Mr. Romaine made himself responsible for this sum, and on the mornings of the Sunday and Tuesday following, he pleaded from the pulpit for his poor parishioners, who had been burnt out of their houses, and lost their all. The sum raised upon this occasion, added to a donation of fifty pounds from his royal highness the duke of York, amounted to upwards of three hundred pounds, which, together with a collection made by the inhabitants of Ludgate-hill, enabled Mr. Romaine to distribute to the poor sufferers from ten to eighteen pounds a piece. He was no less zealous for every good work which came in his way. When the clergy were called upon to collect in their respective parishes for the French emigrants, he was not *a whit behind the chiefest of them* in this business;

business; for which he had the honour of being noticed in an anonymous pamphlet; as if to relieve the distresses of a papist was to encourage the errors of popery. We may surely, and ought to separate the mistakes from the miseries of any man; not perhaps as causes and effects, but as to their respective influences upon our minds. We may be guarded against the one, without being hardened against the other. We may remember how the papists persecuted us in times past, but we have protested against them to very little purpose, unless we have learned to *love our enemies, to bless them that curse us, and to pray for them who despitefully use us and persecute us*. And I cannot but think, that the asylum afforded them in this country, in their present distress, is to be ranked among the many acts of benevolence which reflect infinite honour upon the English nation.

There are many also of the public charities which have lost a great friend and benefactor in Mr. Romaine. None will miss him more than the Royal Humane Society. From a conviction of the usefulness of this institution, he preached a voluntary sermon for them at Blackfriars in the year 1777. He observed that not only the lives but the souls of some of his parishioners had been saved by the means of it; that their miraculous recovery made them serious; that their seriousness brought them to church; that the Lord of the church met them there, and gave them the spirit of faith, while they were

hearing of his name. Mr. Romaine preached annually for this society for seventeen years, latterly at St. Dunstan's on the Sunday after his course of lectures was ended, and his sermon generally produced thirty pounds, besides two or three new annual subscribers*.

There is also another pious institution which has reason to regret in him the loss of a valuable friend, an institution known by the name of the *Bible Society*, for the purpose of distributing bibles amongst his majesty's forces both by sea and land. Much good has been done by it, and Mr. Romaine had it much at heart; he preached for it in his own and other churches in London, and in different places in the country during his summer excursions, by which means he was a great benefactor to it every year. I am sorry to hear that it has been on the decline, and involved in debt; but it is to be hoped that God will raise up advocates to plead its cause, and that there will be a revival of so good a work, at a time, when we not only want soldiers and sailors, but when we want them to fight in the cause of God and truth, against the most daring spirit of error and innovation that was ever yet in the world.

The life of Mr. Romaine upon earth was the

* These anecdotes were communicated by Dr. Hawes, register of the humane society, wishing them to be made public, and thinking very justly, that it reflects no small honour upon an institution which he has so much at heart, to have had its cause pleaded by so good a man as Mr. Romaine.

course of a man who pursued the even tenor of his way in the service of Christ, and in the ministry of the church of England. It had little or no concern with the men, the politics, or the fashions of this present evil world; it had therefore no great variety as to its outward appearances among men, except in his removals from one situation to another, till he was established first in the lectureship of St. Dunstan's, and afterwards in the living of Blackfriars. These were the theatres in which he acted his part, and exerted his talents to the glory of God, and the good of men. His time then was most regularly disposed of. He resided in London, or near it, from the commencement of the law term in November, until the long vacation after Trinity term, when he generally set out upon a summer excursion, which was always into the north as long as his mother lived, and afterwards chiefly into the west of England; where he had many friends, who were always refreshed by his company, and many churches open to him, which were always benefited by his preaching. He seldom passed a silent sabbath, and never by his own inclination, being desirous, as he expressed it, to say a word for his Master in every place. His bible was his companion both in travel and at home, and regularly read through every year. He lived more with God than with men, and in order to know his real history, or the best part of it, it would be requisite to know what passed between God and his own soul. Much of this has
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been brought to light in his "Life, Walk, and Triumph of Faith;" and more will appear in his private letters, which are now collecting for the public view, and which are to be received as the effusions of *a good man, full of faith and the Holy Ghost*, and as a little history of heaven upon earth.

He was a man naturally close and reserved, irritable to a certain degree, short and quick in his replies, but frequently mistaken as being rude and morose, where he meant nothing of the kind. Had he paid more attention than he did to the various distresses of soul and body, which were brought before him, he could have had no time left for reading, for meditation, for doctrine, for prayer, and, in short, for what every man must attend to in private, who would be useful in public. It was not uncommon for him to tell those who came to him with cases of conscience, and questions of spiritual concern, that he said all* that he had to say in the pulpit. These people might be hurt for the moment by such a dismissal, but they had only to attend upon his preaching the next opportunity, and they found that their difficulties had impressed him as well as themselves, that they had been submitted to God, and been the subjects of his very serious and affectionate consideration. This circumstance contributed much to make his sermons particularly useful, as they were first explanations of the text, and then particular and personal applications of it to the case and condition of every hearer. They were,
without

without appearing to be, studied discourses; not aiming at excellency of speech or wisdom, but at that manifestation of the truth by which he might commend himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

Not that he shunned conversation in its place and season, and the mutual intercourses of a steady and constant friendship, which he kept up with many for a series of years. In company he was polite, affable, and instructive, without affectation; and in domestic life, where the tempers of most men are tried and discovered, he had none superior to him as a master, a father, and a husband. So that he was a man who improved upon acquaintance, and they who knew him best were they who most respected him.

As a family man he had his comforts and his trials. Of the latter none more severe than the loss of his second son, who died in the East Indies, of which event he received the following account in a letter from his commanding officer.

“SIR,

It gives me great concern to be under the disagreeable necessity of communicating to you a melancholy event, in which you are nearly interested. Captain Romaine was seized about a fortnight ago with a disorder in his bowels, which terminated in a flux. I am sorry to add that the consequences have been fatal to him. Every attention has been paid

to his memory which our situation permitted. I will not add to the distress which this misfortune must occasion, by describing how much he was beloved, and how much was expected from him by every person in the regiment.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient and very

faithful servant, &c.

Trincomalee, June 4, 1782. _____

He received this letter upon a Thursday, and being much affected with it, was pressed by Mrs. Romaine not to go to St. Dunstan's that evening; but he answered, that he must not leave his Master's concerns unattended to on that account, and he went and preached as usual.

In nothing was Mr. Romaine more to be admired than in the management of his time. His hour of breakfast was six in the morning, of dinner half past one at noon, and of supper seven in the evening. His family were assembled to prayer at nine o'clock in the morning, and at the same hour at night. His particular friends were admitted occasionally to his morning service, and found it a most profitable and precious occasion; for his previous meditations had been upon the Lord's word: his

Hebrew Pfalter was his constant companion at breakfast, and he has been often heard to say, how much his first repast was *sanctified by the word of God and prayer*. From ten o'clock to one he was generally employed in visiting the sick and his friends: he retired to his study after dinner, and sometimes resumed the exercise of walking, which he deferred till after supper, in the height of summer. After the evening service in his family, he retired again to his study, and to his bed at the hour of ten. From this mode of living he never deviated, except when he was a guest in the houses of his friends, and then he breakfasted at seven, dined at two, and supped at eight. His adherence to rule in this respect was never more strongly marked than in a circumstance which befel him during the last years of his life. He was invited by a great dignitary in the church to dine with him at five o'clock; he felt respect for that person, and wished to shew it; instead therefore of sending a written apology, he waited upon him himself, thanked him for his invitation, and excused himself by pleading his long habits of early hours, his great age and *often infirmities*. Here was plain truth united, as it may be, with polished manners: it *rendered honour to whom honour was due*, and it supported the character of a man who *walked by the same rule, who minded the same thing, and who lived the life that he now lived in the flesh by the faith of the Son of God*.

Mr. Romaine derived many advantages from this
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regular disposition of his time: he redeemed it from many idle visits, much vain conversation, and from all conformity to the world. His plan of life precluded all these things, and great must have been his gain in a pilgrimage of fourscore years. His chief arts of health were rule and temperance, and they were the means of preserving to the end of his days the soundness of his mind, the health of his body, and the prosperity of his soul.

His natural temper, like that of most other people, might have given him plague enough; but it was subject to divine grace, and therefore furnished him with matter of praise as well as humiliation. In his latter years it was scarce discoverable; and whatever defects of it had appeared in the former parts of his life, he was not backward to acknowledge them. One proof of this may supply the place of many—the anecdote is authentic—it may be useful to many—it can be offensive to none—for it reflects no little honour on the parties concerned in it, of whom our departed friend was one, and a dissenting minister now alive, the other. This minister had often attended Mr. Romaine's lectures at St. Dunstan's, till hearing some very severe things thrown out against the dissenters, and which he thought not justifiable, he determined to wait upon Mr. Romaine for an explanation. He did so accordingly; and having made his observations and complaints, Mr. Romaine replied, "I do not want to have any thing to say to you, Sir."—"If you will hear me, Sir," added

ed the other, " I will tell you my name; I must, Sir, acquaint you with my profession, I am a Protestant Dissenting Minister."—" Sir," said Mr. Romaine, " I neither wish to know your name, nor your profession." Upon which Mr. Towle (who is the gentleman here alluded to) bowed and took his leave. Some time after Mr. Romaine, to the great surprise of his hearer and reprover, returned his visit, and after the usual salutation, — " Well, Mr. Towle, I am not come to renounce my principles, I have not changed my sentiments, I will not give up my preference to the church of England, &c.; but I am come as a christian to make some apology. I think my behaviour to you, Sir, the other day, was not becoming, nor such as it should have been, &c."—They then shook hands, and parted good friends. The substance of this relation, when it was made to me, I immediately communicated to the surviving party concerned in it, requesting to know the truth of it, with any additional circumstances he might recollect, as well as his permission to make it public. The following is part of his very handsome answer to my letter. " Without any hesitation, and with the greatest cheerfulness, would I instantly comply with your request, but really, Sir, it is not in my power. I cannot recollect the particular circumstances of the affair you refer to, or the particular expressions used by Mr. Romaine and myself in our first interview, or afterwards by Mr. Romaine when he called on me. So far do I remember

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ber the substance of what passed both at his house and mine, that I am certain the account given in your letter contains the general outlines of the whole matter. Although at the close of the last conversation Mr. Romaine and I positively disavowed the least idea of renouncing our respective principles, or being indifferent towards them; united in our abhorrence of that *temporizing*, which is too fashionable in our day, each expressed a sincere esteem for the other, a friendly intercourse was kept up between him and myself to the day of his death, and I have not the smallest suspicion, but that, as long as I live, I shall remember him with veneration, as an eminently consistent and respectable character."

This testimony is true, and worth a thousand stories; it neither discredits the pen of the survivor, nor the memory of the deceased; nor ought it to be without its use to the reader. We are prone to judge others, though we can seldom do it without condemning ourselves; and if we are partakers with one another in faults and infirmities, we shall do well to be followers of those who have shewed a consciousness, and made confession of them.

Among other friends and admirers of Mr. Romaine, was the unhappy Dr. Dodd. When he began the world he was a zealous favourer of Hebrew learning, and distinguished himself as a preacher. From a professed similitude in studies and principles, he cultivated an acquaintance with Mr. Romaine; but when he forsook such companions, *having loved*

this

this present world, he told Mr. Romaine, that he should be glad to see him at his house, but hoped not to be acknowledged by him, if they should happen to meet in public company. All intercourse therefore ceased between them, till the love of the world, and the things that are in it, brought its victim to prison. At this time a particular friend of Dr. Dodd, who, much to his honour, stuck close to him in all his disgrace and adversity, met Mr. Romaine in his way from Newgate at the bottom of the Old Bailey. Their conversation naturally turned upon the unhappy person, whom he had just left; and, after usual enquiries, Mr. Romaine said, he was sorry to hear that Dr. Dodd in prison was visited by light and trifling company. The Doctor's friend was equally surprised and hurt at the report of such an untruth; and particularly that it should have been carried to *one*, of whom Dr. Dodd had ever expressed an high opinion, and with whom in former years he had lived in a degree of intimacy. He told Mr. Romaine that indeed he was sadly misinformed; that by himself he might fairly estimate the society of Dr. Dodd's room; that none resorted thither but they whose minds were duly and deeply impressed like his own; and that even as to others, he conceived that the surrounding circumstances of horror were sufficient to preclude all levity and impertinence. Mr. Romaine expressed himself as glad to hear this, gave up his authority upon which he made his former assertions, and promised to do all

in his power to set right so injurious a business. He then left Dr. Dodd's friend at the door of St. Dunstan's, where he was going to preach his evening lecture.

Whether his prejudices were removed by this interview, or whether his pity was excited by the circumstances of the prisoner himself, Mr. Romaine afterwards visited him at his particular request. A gentleman one day met him there, and wishing to know his sentiments, took care to leave Newgate at the same time; when, walking out together, he asked him, if he, who knew so much of the human heart, thought poor Dodd a real sincere penitent. Mr. Romaine answered, I hope he may be a *real* penitent, but there is a great difference between *saying* and *feeling*, "God be merciful to me a sinner." This saying, as the lady who communicated it justly observed, deserves to be written in letters of gold. The same lady has favoured us with another anecdote of Mr. Romaine, which equally proves his abhorrence of sin, and his pity for the sinner. He was walking in the street with a gentleman, when he overheard a poor thoughtless man solemnly calling upon Jehovah to damn him for ever to the bottomless pit. Mr. Romaine stopped, took half-a-crown out of his pocket, and said, "My friend, I will give you this, if you will repeat that oath again." The man started, and said, "What, Sir, do you think I will damn my soul for half-a-crown? Mr. Romaine mildly replied, "As you did it just now for
nothing,

nothing, I could not suppose that you would refuse to do it for a reward." The poor creature, struck, as Mr. Romaine meant he should be, replied, "God bless and reward you, Sir, wherever you are; I believe you have saved my soul. I hope I shall never swear again as long as I live."

It were to be wished, for the sake of posterity, that a man, whose heart was so whole with God, and whose very soul was in the work of Christ, had kept a diary, or committed more of his thoughts, and the occurrences of his life, to writing. But among all his papers only one of this sort has been found; entitled, *171, AN OLD MAN*, and written on the day when he attained to the age of threescore years and ten. A happier day was never spent upon earth. Take the description of it in his own words.

"Through the gracious hand of my God I have this day arrived at the age of man. I have therefore set it apart for meditation, prayer, and praise. May the Holy Spirit help me to improve it, that I may spend the little of my remaining time with more faith and unceasing gratitude. When I look back, I would be all adoration. As a creature I worship the Creator. Once I was nothing, and He brought me into being. O, what distinguishing favour to make me a rational creature! And as I was a ruined man, a sinner guilty, helpless, miserable! O, what sovereign grace to make me a new man! who can tell (I cannot) how great the love was which provided a Saviour for such a rebel! What patience,

how infinite ! to spare me through childhood, through youth, through manhood, when every day, and every thing in the day, were calling aloud for vengeance. I might have been many years ago in hell, and most justly; and now I adore the long-suffering of God, which kept me out of it. He had purposes of love toward me, which he made known in his own time and way. It was sovereign love which brought me to know myself, and to know Jesus. His own Holy Spirit begun and carried on the work. He opened mine eyes to understand the scriptures. He gave me to believe their truth, and to feel their power; and now I set my seal to every word in them; finding God to be true and faithful, true in the promise, faithful in the fulfilment. Rec. Christ—one with him—live by him—live on him—worship him—do all on earth as well as I can, till he enable me to do it better in heaven.

In this believing view of things, I acknowledge that I have lived to a blessed time. All that is worth enjoying has been freely given to me. By the quickening grace of the Spirit, brought into oneness with Jesus, and to partake of the Father's love in Him, All is mine. Glory be to Father, Son, and Spirit in the highest, the covenanting 3ty*. is mine. These are the prospects which faith, looking

* *The Trinity*. In this instance, as well as in another, a few lines above, viz. the abbreviation *Rec.* for *receive*, I thought it best to leave the expressions as I found them in the original manuscript.

back, opens to the christian with delight; and thereby renders my present condition a subject of praise and thankfulness. My time is almost run out, and what is short is now also but labour and sorrow. So says the Oracle. And I feel it. The infirmities of age, the decay of the faculties of mind as well as body, consequently usefulness in one's place and station dying daily, these are always giving warning that the house made with hands must soon be taken down. It begins to be very troublesome to keep it up. One prop falls after another, and repeats the lesson—You must soon be turned out. Look after the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Blessed be God for giving us the earnest of his Spirit, to enable us to look forward with a pleasing hope, when mortality shall be swallowed up of life.

It is by this same faith that God has reconciled my heart to his providence. He is my Father, Jesus my portion, and my exceeding great reward; my God, and my Keeper. It is my privilege that he is to manage for me. He knows what is best for me, and to him I leave it. To be richer or greater, in more health, or in more honour, would be no addition to my happiness. I have enough of this world's goods. I am content with my place and station, and ask for nothing but more thankfulness for what I have. O what a calm does this bring upon my mind! Looking back I can see his gracious dealings with me in all the events of my life. And

he has brought me and settled me in the very condition in which I ought to be. What has God done? what has he not done to make me satisfied? Indeed I have all the reason that ever man had to adore him for his providence, and to bless him for his dealings with the children of men.

This day such are my views of his goodness to me in the time past, both in temporal, and also in spiritual mercies. All is well; and blessings on his name, the prospect before me, notwithstanding the infirmities of age, is comfortable. The promises in the word afford exercise for faith, and never ceasing dependence; not only general promises, but also particular, suited exactly to my present circumstances. Our God has made gracious provision for old age, and has enabled me to make use of it, that through patience and comfort of the scriptures, I might now have hope. He has given me a general warrant for my security. I have committed myself into his care and keeping; and he has declared, *I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.* This is a continual cordial, and extends its heart-felt influence to the special promises, such as, Isaiah xlv. 3, 4. This is spoken to the whole Israel of God, who have not only the life of the body from him, but chiefly the life of the soul. He creates them anew by the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. He is the Author—He is the carrier on—He brings that life to its full perfection. It is every moment supported by his power, and blessed with his paternal affection. Age may

may come, hoary hairs may appear, the vigour of the faculties may decay, but his love is the same. He reveals it. He applies it. The old man feels it, and he turns it into the prayer of faith. O my Father, I do hearken unto Thee; Thou hast supported, Thou hast carried me from my birth to this moment; and I doubt not but now in mine old age, and in my hoary hairs, Thou wilt still carry me and bear me, until Thou hast finally delivered me. Amen—I believe, Lord, it shall be done unto me according to thy word.”

The last years of his life seem to have taken their turn from this day. His *hoary head was found in the way of righteousness, and it was indeed a crown of glory*. There appeared to be little but heaven in his sermons, and in his life. He was *an example to believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, and purity*. It has been observed to me of him, that he was a diamond, rough often, but very pointed, and the more he was broken by years, the more he appeared to shine. There was indeed a light upon his countenance, and particularly when he preached, which appeared like the dawn, or the faint resemblance of glory. If one met him by the way, and asked him how he did, his general answer was, “As well as I can be out of heaven.” He made this reply a little before his death to a friend and acquaintance older than himself, and of a different communion; and then added, “There is but one central point, in which we must all meet, Jesus

Christ and him crucified." This was the object which he kept always in sight—this the subject which dwelt upon his heart and tongue—the wonderful God-man, whom, according to his own expressions, he had taken for body and for soul, for time and for eternity, his present and his everlasting all.

He has drawn his own character when describing the "Triumph of Faith" over the infirmities of age. He was a cheerful pleasant old man. He walked in the steps of the faith of Abraham, and *brought forth more fruit in his age, till he died an old man and full of days*, satisfied with all that was past, all that was present, and all that was before him. He pursued his ministerial labours, and his summer excursions (which he frequently denominated his summer and winter campaigns) to the last, keeping the field as a good soldier and servant of Jesus Christ, till it pleased his Master to call him to an honourable retreat, and soon to give him his final discharge. The decline of his mortal life was gentle in itself, and rapid in its progress; but so protracted, as to enable him to shew, that the *Lord his strength was true, and that there was no unrighteousness in him*. The same faith, which employed him so well and so happily in his health and life, was his support in sickness, and his joy in dissolution.

His fatal illness attacked him on the sixth day of June, and put a period to his mortal life on the twenty-sixth day of July. A season of seven weeks, in which he was exercised as a patient instead of a preacher,

preacher. As the presence of God had been with him in one state, so it did not leave him in the other. The last sermon which he preached, was on the preceding Thursday evening at St. Dunstan's ; it was an exposition of the eighteenth chapter of St. John's Gospel; he remarked to his curate, that he must get on as fast as he could, lest he should not get through the Gospel, as it was his intention to do, before the lectures were over. He complained of languor after preaching, and returned to Mr. Whitridge's house at Balaam-hill, beyond Clapham, where he was then upon a visit. His concluding sermon at Blackfriars was on the preceding Tuesday morning, from the thirteenth verse of the hundred and third Psalm. *Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.* He was going through the Psalm, and though he did not preach upon the following verses, he practised them in a very remarkable manner, and left his dying testimony to the truth of them, *For he knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are but dust. As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone, and the place thereof shall know it no more. But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting, to them that fear him: and his righteousness unto children's children. To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.* The mortality of man, and the mercy of Jehovah, here so pathetically described, met together in the person of Mr. Romaine, and formed a most delightful union.

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The one released him from all misery, the other introduced him to all happiness. But how sad is the case when these things are separated? What a wretch is one, subject to mortality, and not at the same time an object of the mercy of the Lord?

Mr. Romaine, from the moment that he was seized with his illness, considered it as his last; and though at intervals he had faint symptoms of a probable recovery, yet he never attempted to resume his ministerial functions. He spoke of himself as a dying man, but always in the language of one who was *living and believing in Jesus*. On the morning of his seizure he came down to breakfast at six o'clock as usual, presided in family devotion, and prayed most earnestly to God, that "He would fit them for, and support them in, their trials that day, which might be many." Such they were to his friends, if not to himself; for he received his summons *to depart, and to be with Christ*. He returned the same day to London, and conversed most profitably and comfortably in the way, on the approach of death, and near prospect of eternity. "O! how animating is the view which I now have of death, and the hope laid up for me in heaven full of glory and immortality!"

The next day was the sabbath, and he was expected to preach as usual. The feelings of his congregation, when he did not appear among them, and the painful office, to which his fellow-servant in the ministry was called, when he stood up in his place and assigned the cause of his absence, are more easily

easily conceived than described. Lamentations more sincere never were excited, and prayers more fervent never ascended from earth to heaven.

He continued three weeks in London under medical advice, and made use of the means which his physician thought fit to prescribe to him. "You are taking," said he, "much pains to prop up this feeble body; I thank you for it; it will not do now." His Hebrew Psalter lay close by him, and out of it he frequently read a verse or two, not being able to attend to more. The nature of his disorder was such that he could speak but little; and being once asked if he would see some of his friends, he replied, "he needed no better company than he enjoyed." *The Lord his God was with him*, and so blessed him with faith and patience, that not one fretful or murmuring word ever escaped his lips.

Soon after he was seized, a friend called upon business, and took the opportunity of saying, he hoped he was better, and happy in his views. "Yes," replied he, "upon that point I have no doubt, for I have much of the presence of Jesus with me." He sent a message by this person to his curate, being unable to converse with him, to desire his prayers; and that his friends and all the congregation would remember him at the throne of grace. This he frequently afterwards repeated to his curate. At other times he said, "he had been in the deep waters, but had enjoyed much support; that he waited to enter into the courts of the Lord; that his soul was athirst for God, yea even the living God."

On

On the twenty-sixth day of June he left town, and went to a friend's house at Tottenham, for a fortnight, where he was so much better, as to be able to walk about the garden. Upon his return to town, he was again visited by his curate, and thought to be a little revived. He said, that he had long lain at first in the arms of death, and, if recovering, it was very slowly. "But this," says he, "is but a poor dying life at best; however I am in his hands who will do the best for me," and added with a peculiar energy, "I am sure of that." "I have lived to experience all I have spoken, and all I have written, and I bless God for it." After much the same expressions he added to another friend, "I have the peace of God in my conscience, and the love of God in my heart; and that you know is sound experience."—And again—"I knew before the doctrines I preached to be truths, but now I experience them to be blessings." Thanking another friend for a visit, he said, that he had come to see a saved sinner. This, he had often affirmed, should be his dying boast, and that he desired to die with the language of the publican in his mouth, "God be merciful to me a sinner *."

In this frame of mind he continued a few days in London, and returned on the thirteenth day of July to his friend's at Balaam-hill, where he had been originally seized. His strength from that time rapidly decayed. He had frequent spasms at his heart, and shortness of breath, attended with degrees of

* See Mr. Goode's Funeral Sermon.

pain and convulsion; but his faith and patience never failed him. He was frequently saying, "O how good is God!" "What entertainments and comforts does he give me! What a prospect do I see before me of glory and immortality! He is my God in life, in death, and throughout eternity." On the twenty-third day of July, as he sat at breakfast, he said, "It is now near sixty years since God opened my mouth to publish the everlasting sufficiency and eternal glory of the salvation of Christ Jesus; and it has now pleased him to shut my mouth, that my heart might feel and experience what my mouth hath so often spoken." On the twenty-fourth day of July, after he had been helped down stairs, he said, "O! how good is God! with what a night has he favoured me!" requesting, as he had often done, that prayers without ceasing might be made for him, that his faith and patience might not fail. He expressed exceeding great kindness and affection for his partner Mrs. Romaine, and thanking her for all her care of him, he said, "Come, my love, that I may bless you; the Lord be with you a covenant God for ever to save and bless you." He addressed himself with the same tenderness and affection to his son; of whom also he spoke much and oft during his illness, expressing his hope of him as a son in the faith as well as the flesh. The lady, who was cherishing in her house such a dying guest, upon seeing and hearing him bless his wife, said, "Have you not a blessing for me, Sir?" "Yes," he said, "I have; I pray God to bless you;" and so
+ he

he said to every one that came to him. On Saturday the twenty-fifth day of July, he was not down stairs at all, but lay upon the couch all day, in great weakness of body, but strong in faith, giving glory to God.—The power of Christ was resting upon him, and keeping him in the continual exercise of prayer and praise. This was the last day he spent upon earth, and in the close of it he was thought to have said, “Yea, though I walk through the valley and shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me.” About an hour before he died, his friend and host went up to him, and said, “I hope, my dear Sir, you now find the salvation of Jesus Christ precious dear and valuable to you.” His answer was, “He is a precious Saviour to me now.” These were the last words which he uttered to man. To the Lord he said, “Holy, Holy, Holy! Holy blessed Jesus, to thee be endless praise!” And in the first hour of the next day, which was the sabbath-day, he resigned his spirit to God who gave it.

So lived and so died the Rev. William Romaine.

It was the design of his surviving relations to restore his dust to the earth with a plain and private burial; but every intention of this sort was prevented by the affection of his numerous friends, who were all importunate to shew the last respect to his person, by attending his remains to the grave. On Monday the third day of August, 1795, the corpse was removed from Mr. Whitridge's house at Balaam-hill, in order to be interred in the rectory-vault of Blackfriars church. The funeral proceeded

at about eleven o'clock in the forenoon, and was joined on Clapham-common by near fifty coaches, filled with the lamenting followers of their revered and beloved pastor. It was attended by many more on foot, who surrounded the hearse, or followed it weeping. By the time that the procession reached the Obelisk in St. George's Fields, the multitude collected was very great indeed; but silence, solemnity, and decorum, universally prevailed. At the foot of Blackfriars-bridge, the children of the charity school, together with the parish beades, were waiting to attend. The city marshals on horseback with their men, and with black silk scarfs and hatbands, rode before the hearse to the entrance of the church. These had been ordered out by the Lord Mayor, as his token of respect to the memory of a man who had sustained so great and so useful a character in the city of London. The constables of the ward also attended to preserve order, lest any evil-minded people should take advantage of such an opportunity to raise a disturbance; but nothing of the kind appeared: there seemed to but one mind in the vast multitude, and but one impression made by the loss of *an able minister of the New Testament, and a faithful steward of the mysteries of God.*

Excepting the space left for the entrance of the corpse and its attendants, the church was previously filled with people, who were clothed in black, and were inwardly mourning over their departed minister. The funeral service was performed by the Rev. Mr.

Goode

Goode to a very numerous and affected audience, weeping, not for him who was at rest from his labours, but for themselves and for their children, who had lost the benefit of them.

The church was hung in black, as was also the church at St. Dunstan's, and three funeral sermons preached on the Lord's day following. The same tokens of love and esteem were shewn in different places of worship, and the same testimonies born by different ministers to the excellencies of a man who deserved so well of them all. He lived and died in the communion of the English church, and in most cordial fellowship with all who *love the LORD JESUS CHRIST in sincerity.*

There remains to be paid but one tribute more, and that is a monument, which is now in the hands of an eminent artist, by order of his friends, and is soon to be erected in the church where his body is laid. A monument, which will be inscribed not with the virtues of a statesman or a hero, but with the heavenly virtues of a man whom God *called out of darkness into his marvellous light*, whom He permitted to shine for a season in his church upon earth, and has now gathered to his people in heaven; where they *that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever.*

FINIS.

A
C A T A L O G U E

OF THE WRITINGS OF

The Rev. WILLIAM ROMAINE, M.A.

PUBLISHED BY HIM IN HIS LIFE-TIME.

1739. THE DIVINE LEGATION of MOSES demonstrated from his having made exprefs mention of, and insisted so much on the doctrine of a future state: whereby Mr. Warburton's attempt to prove the divine legation of Moses from the omission of a future state is proved to be absurd, and destructive of all revelation, a Sermon, preached before the Univerfity at St. Mary's in Oxford, March 4, 1739, from Mark xii. 24, 25, 26, 27.

1741. NO JUSTIFICATION BY THE LAW OF NATURE, a Sermon, preached before the Lord Mayor at the cathedral church of St. Paul, September 2, from Rom. ii. 14, 15.

1742. FUTURE REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS proved to be the fancies of the Mosaic dispensation, a second Sermon, from Mark xii. 26, 27. preached before the Univerfity at St. Mary's in Oxford, December 6, 1741.

BOOKS WRITTEN BY

JEPHTHAH'S Vow fulfilled, and his daughter not sacrificed, a Sermon, preached before the University at St. Mary's in Oxford, from Judges xi. 30, 31.

1747. CONCORDANCE AND LEXICON OF MARIUS DE CALASIO, 4 Vols. folio, printed at London.

1753. AN ANSWER to a Pamphlet entitled, Considerations on the Bill to permit Persons professing the Jewish Religion to be naturalized. Motto Acts xiv. 4. Reprinted by the Citizens of London, 1753.

1755. NINE SERMONS on the 107th Psalm.

1755. A DISCOURSE on the Benefit which the Holy Spirit of God is to a Man in his Journey through Life, preached at Christ Church in Newgate-street, on Whitfun-Monday, May 19, from Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26, 27.

1755. A DISCOURSE upon the Self-existence of Jesus Christ, preached at St. George's, Hanover-square, and at St. Dunstan's in the West, from John viii. 24.

1755. A METHOD for preventing the Frequency of Robberies and Murders, proposed in a Discourse delivered at St. George's, Hanover-square, St. Dunstan's in the West, and at several other places in London, from Matt. xv. 19, 20.

1755. AN ALARM TO A CARELESS WORLD, a Discourse preached November 30, at St. Dunstan's in the West, from Amos iv. 12.

1756. THE DUTY OF WATCHFULNESS ENFORCED, in a Discourse preached December 14, 1755, from Matt. xxv. 13.

1756. THE SURE FOUNDATION, two Discourses preached before

THE REV. WILLIAM ROMAINE.

before the University of Oxford, April 11, in the Morning at St. Mary's, and in the Afternoon at St. Peter's, from 1 Cor. iii. 11.

1756. The PARABLE of the Dry Bones Interpreted in a Sermon preached at St. Olave's, Southwark, October 24, from Ezek. xxxvii. 4.

1757. THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS, considered in two Discourses preached before the University of Oxford, March 20, in the Morning at St. Mary's, and in the Afternoon at St. Peter's, from Isaiah xlv. 8.

1757. AN EARNEST INVITATION to the Friends of the Established Church to join with several of their Brethren, Clergy, and Laity, in London, in setting apart one Hour of every Week for prayer and supplication, during the present troublesome times. Motto Psalm l. 15.

1757. THE DUTY OF PRAYING FOR OTHERS, a Sermon on Acts xii. 5.

1757. A SEASONABLE ANTIDOTE AGAINST POPERY, in a Dialogue upon Justification. Printed for John Palmer, Bookseller, Wine-street, Bristol.

1759. Twelve SERMONS upon Solomon's Song.

1759. The KNOWLEDGE OF SALVATION precious in the Hour of Death, a Sermon, preached January 4, upon the Death of the Rev. Mr. James Harvey, from Luke ii. 29, 30.

1760. Twelve DISCOURSES upon the Law and Gospel.

1762. THE BLESSEDNESS OF LIVING AND DYING IN THE LORD, a Sermon, upon the Death of the Rev. Mr. Thomas Jones, Chaplain of St. Saviour's, Southwark, from Psalm cxvi. 15.

BOOKS WRITTEN BY, &c.

1763. THE LIFE OF FAITH.

1764. A SERMON, preached at St. Ann's Blackfriars, on Sunday September 30, upon his Nomination as a Candidate for the Rectory, from 2 Cor. iv. 5.

1765. THE SCRIPTURAL DOCTRINE of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper briefly stated.

1771. THE WALK OF FAITH. 2 Vols.

1775. AN ESSAY ON PSALMODY, with a Collection out of the Book of Psalms, suited to every Sunday in the Year.

1795. THE TRIUMPH OF FAITH.

This Catalogue is as exact as we can make it; but we are not certain as to the Dates of some of the Publications, not being able to get at the first Editions of them.

